

George Washington Papers, Series 2, Letterbooks 1754-1799

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, April 3, 1793.

Gentlemen: On my way to, and at the landing of George Town yesterday,⁹² had a good deal of conversation with Major Ellicott, who says, if you will give him an opportunity, he will make it appear to *your satisfaction* that there are not those errors in his work that have been reported; and that the work reported to have been done, and *not actually executed* he is persuaded he can expln. to your entire satisfaction if you will afford him a candid and patient hearing as above. This I assured him you would do, as truth was the object you were in pursuit of.

I took this occasion to repeat to him *again* in stronger terms than ever that I would not interfere between the Commissioners and the characters subordinate to them; and that it was to *them*, and them *only*, he was accountable for his conduct; because it was with them, and them only I could or would communicate in future. He acknowledged the propriety thereof, but observed at the sametime, that he could not be responsible for any that he did not himself employ; adding that the whole of this uneasiness arises from one Dermot⁹³ (I think he called him) whom he *did not employ*.

I informed him moreover, in unequivocal language, that his conduct, as far as it

92. The President left Philadelphia for Mount Vernon on Wednesday, March 27. He was in Baltimore, March 30, and Georgetown and Mount Vernon, April 2.

93. James Read McDermott. He had been appointed by David Stuart.

had appeared to me from the correspondence between you and him, was not respectful to you, when it ought to have been so and was always expected by the Employer from the employed. He assured me he meant no disrespect; and declared in the most solemn terms, that he had endeavored to the utmost of his abilities to execute the work well, and with all the dispatch the accuracy of it would admit adding, as his firm belief, that no work of the same kind and magnitude was ever performed with so few errors. he seemed as far as I could discover, to be inclined, not only to stay until the first of May, but 'till the whole plan was compleated. I advised him to go to you, and in a proper manner, to make the above communications, and propose something agreeably thereto. If he does, I submit, without giving an opinion, or wishing to interfere in your business, whether an

accommodation under all circumstances is not to be preferred to an open breach; and a newspaper justification which will inevitably follow.

I ought also to mention (but this I do for *your* information, *only*) that I also had a conversation with Mr. Stoddart after any I had with either of you Gentlemen on this Subject, in which he expressed an earnest desire that means could be devised to prevent the dismissal of Mr. Ellicot as he thot. the event, at this time, would

be attended with disagreeable consequences; especially as Mr. Ellicot wd. be able he thought to prove the chargs unfd. My reply was that I would support the Commissioners. that it was painful to me, to see such interferences of the Proprietors who, in my opinion, had no more to do with the conduct of them (farther than to receive their dues according to contract) than a Citizen of the State of New Hampshire or Georgia; and moreover, that they appeared to me to be acting the parts of suicides to their own interests, as far as their conduct could effect it. To all wch. he acquiesced.

I thought it but right to make the foregoing communication, that you might give it the consideration it deserved, and to add, that you may be assured, I am etc.⁹⁴

To CHARLES LEE

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1793.

Sir: Your letter of the 4 instant came duly to hand. I am sorry it is not convenient for you to exercise the office of Collector at Alexandria any longer; but as it was your wish to deliver up all the official books

94. From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

and papers belonging to your office, before the present date, I requested Colo. Fitzgerald yesterday, to receive them; altho' it is not agreeable to me to go into the detail of business with any except the head of the Department to which it belongs, or thro' him with the immediate Agent. However, as you are about to leave town, I shall depart from this rule in the present instance, and do now request that you will consider Colo. Fitzgerald as your Successor in office, and (if it be inconvenient to you to hold them until the matter can pass through the usual form) deliver the Official Books and papers to him accordingly I am etc.¹¹

To JOHN FITZGERALD

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1793.

Sir: Enclosed is an open Letter to Mr. Lee,⁶ Collector at Alexandria, requesting him to deliver up the Office books and papers to you; tho' it would be more regular, and in my opinion better that the matter should be suspended until I return to Philadelphia, (for which place I shall set out tomorrow) when a Commission will issue agreeably to Constitutional modes.⁷ I am etc.⁸

11. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

6. Charles Lee.

7. Fitzgerald's recess appointment was confirmed by the Senate, Dec. 30, 1793.

8. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To GOVERNOR THOMAS MIFFLIN

Philadelphia, April 25, 1793.

Sir: The measures which your Excellency proposes to adopt to prevent any hostile incursions into the Indian Country from this State until the proposed Treaty shall be finished, appear to me to be such as are proper for the occasion, and likely to prove successful.

No others occur to me at present as necessary to secure the object; if any should, I will propose them with frankness, as I am persuaded, from the obliging manner in which you express your readiness to adopt them, that you will neglect no measure which may tend to facilitate the peace which is so desirable for our Country. I am etc.²³

23. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On April 27 Washington made the following note on the contract between William Allibone, superintendent of the Cape Henlopen lighthouse and all the beacons, buoys, etc.; the Delaware river and bay; and Matthew Van Dusen, blacksmith of Philadelphia; a mooring chain for one of the floating

beacons in Delaware bay: "Approved, so far as it respects the new chain; but is there an entire loss of the old one?" From a photograph in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS, AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

(Circular)

Philadelphia, April 18, 1793.

Sir: The posture of affairs in Europe, particularly between France and Great Britain, places the United States in a delicate situation; and requires much consideration of the measures which will be proper for them to observe in the War betwn. those Powers. With a view to forming a general plan of conduct for the Executive, I have stated and enclosed sundry questions to be considered preparatory to a meeting at my house tomorrow; where I shall expect to see you at 9 o'clock, and to receive the result of

your reflections thereon.¹⁵

15. From the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress, a press copy of which is in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE PROVISORY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF FRANCE

Philadelphia, May 24, 1793.

Very great and good friends and allies: The citizen Ternant had delivered to me the letter wherein you inform me that yielding to his desire to serve his country in the military line, you had determined to recall him from his mission as your Minister plenipotentiary to the U. S.⁴¹ His conduct, during the term of his residence in this Country, has been such as to meet my entire approbation and esteem; and it is with great pleasure I render him the justice of this testimony. in whatever line of service you may hereafter think proper to employ him, I have no doubt he will so conduct himself as to merit well of his Country, and to obtain it's favor and protection.

I assure you, with a sincere participation, of the great and constant friendship, which these U.S. bear to the French nation. of the interest they feel in whatever concerns their happiness and prosperity, and of their wishes for a perpetual fraternity with them, and I pray god to have them and you, very

41. Ternant had written to Washington (May 17), that he had been recalled by France. His letter (unsigned) is in the *Washington Papers*. Washington at first wrote the following reply, which, dated merely May, 1793, is in the *Washington Papers*:

"The first intimation, which I received of your mission to the United States, in the capacity you lately filled, gave me pleasure. I anticipated, on your part, a conduct, which, while it was calculated to promote the objects of your duty, would, in the manner, be pleasing to the Government and Citizens of this Country. My anticipations have not been disappointed. Uniformly attentive to the advancement of the Interests confided to your care, (notwithstanding the agitations and vicissitudes experienced in the government of your Country), the tenor of your official and private conduct, throughout the course of your mission, has appeared to me deserving of approbation and has acquired to you a new title to my regard.

"I give you this private and personal mark of my satisfaction and esteem, in remembrance of your Services, as an Officer in the Army of the United States and in consideration of the peculiar and extraordinary circumstances under which you have acted. With sentiments of attachment and regard, I am etc."

Washington has indorsed on the verso of this letter: "This letter was draughted in answr. to the one which covers it. But on reflection was not sent, nor any written reply given to the recalled French Minister; for as much as the motives to that recall were not communicated, and the policy of the measure questionable as the consequences could not be foreseen."

A note in the *Journal of the Proceedings of the President* (May 18) states that Genet presented his credentials at 2 o'clock and Ternant his letter of recall.

Another note, under date of May 24, states that the President observed to the Secretary of State: "that in the present posture of French Affairs, I thought we ought to consider very deliberately on all these measures before we acted; for it was impossible to decide with precision what would be the final issue of the contest, consequently, that this Governmt. ought not to go faster than it was obliged; but to walk on cautious ground."

great and good friends and allies, in his holy keeping.⁴²

42. The draft, in the writing of Jefferson, is in the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.

To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

Philadelphia, June 12, 1793.

Dr. Sir: Major Jackson, with whom you are very well acquainted, is about to embark for Europe on business unknown to me, having made no enquiry respecting it.

It is natural to do so, and of course I presume he will call upon you, in which case, I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities as an old acquaintance.

With very great esteem etc.⁶⁸

To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

(Private)

Philadelphia, June 13, 1793.

Dear Sir: I have before me your Letters of the 28 of Decr. 1792, 6th. and 10th. of Jany. and 14th. of February 1793. To do anything more at present than acknowledge the receipt of these letters, and thank you most cordially for the information and opinions contained in them, is out of my power, (especially as Notice of the opportunity is short:), for you will readily believe, my dr. sir, that, what with the current affairs of the Government, the unpleasant aspect of matters on our Indian frontiers, and the momentous occurrences in Europe, I am not only pressed with the quantity of business; but that the

68. Practically the same letter was sent this same day to Thomas Pinckney, and Jackson furnished with a certificate of service. Both this letter to Pinckney and a copy of the certificate are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

nature of a great part of it is peculiarly delicate and embarrassing.

Mr. Jefferson will improve the present opportunity to give you full information respecting our public affairs; and I shall take the advantage of it to send to your care the enclosed packet for Mde. la

Fayette, which contains duplicates of letters which I have written in answer to her's; and which I will thank you to convey to her by as safe an opportunity as can be met with, and even if that opportunity should be a late one, it would be better than to trust it to an uncertain conveyance.

With sentiments of sincere regard etc.⁷²

To THE MARQUISE DE LAFAYETTE

Philadelphia, June 13, 1793.

Dr. Madam: While I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13 of March, I can, with the greatest truth, assure you, that I feel a sincere sympathy in your afflictions on account of M. de la Fayette. And to shew you that I have not been unmindful of your

72. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

condition; and how earnestly I have been disposed to alleviate your sufferings, as far as is in my power, I enclose you duplicates of two letters which I had the honor of writing to you on the 31st. of January and 16. of March. To these I can only add my most ardent prayers, that you may be again united to M. de la Fayette, under circumstances that may be joyful to you both; and that the evening of that life, whose morning has been devoted to the cause of liberty and humanity, may be crowned with the best of heaven's blessings.

With sentiments of sincere attachment to yourself and your dear offspring, I am etc.⁷¹

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, June 13, 1793.

Gentlemen: This letter will be put into your hands by Mr. Lear, who is well known to one, or more of you.

He has it in contemplation to make (in conjunction with others) a considerable Mercantile establishment in the Federal City; if he should be able to obtain such a site therein, and upon such

terms, as will answer his, and the views of his associates. What these are he can best explain to you; and you from the nature of your resources, will be better

71. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

able than I, to decide on the admissibility of them.

From eight years intimate acquaintance with Mr. Lear. From his knowledge of business, good sense, penetration and caution, I am certain that any proposals made by him, and acceded to by you, will be executed with punctuality. Friendship and justice require this declaration from me, on his behalf. but, as I have intimated before, it is with you to decide, whether the proposals are such as to comport with your general plan for the advancement of the City.

With sentiments of very great esteem etc.⁷⁰

TO THE COMMISSIONERS FOR SETTling ACCOUNTS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND INDIVIDUAL STATES

United States, June 21, 1793.

Gentlemen: Before I can fix upon a time for conferring with you respecting certain points relative to the finishing of your business, I have to request that you will state particularly what those points are,

70. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

that I may have some little time to consider them. As soon as may be after which, I will inform you when it will be convenient for me to see you, and to give any necessary directions concerning them. I am etc.

PS. I hope the communication requested will be made, at furthest, by nine o'clock tomorrow morning, as I am under the necessity of leaving this City tomorrow evening, or early next morning.⁸¹

81. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

TO JAMES HOBAN AND STEPHEN HALLET

Mount Vernon, July 1, 1793.

Gentn: I have considered in the best manner my small knowledge in Architecture, and the peculiar situation of my own Private concerns (which brought me here) will enable me to do, the observations made by Mr. Hallet on the Plan which has been exhibited by Doctr. Thornton; and on acct. of its exterior beauty, and the arrangement of the Apartments, had been adopted. But if this plan is as expensive as it is represented to be; will require such a length of time to execute, either of which would be an important objection to it), and withal so exceptionable in the true principles of Architecture and so defective in some of the ends which are proposed, it ought to be relinquished for one more practicable, more simple, less expensive, and which can be executed in the time allowed by Law.

Having made this declaration, Justice to, and respect for the abilities and character of Doctr. Thornton call upon me to add that he should, before his plan is laid aside, be informed of *all* the objections to, and observations on it. If he cannot obviate them I persuade myself he will have candour enough to acknowledge it, and will readily

see the propriety of a change which will bring the Building within the compass of our means and time. For this purpose, it is my wish and desire that you would both, by Thursday's stage, if practicable, set out for Philadelphia with Doctr. Thornton's Plan, and Mr. Hallets last one, together with the sections of the first, the observations, calculations, and in short every paper relative to both, and to a final decision, that as little time as possible may be lost in fixing this matter.

The reason why I propose *your* going to Philada. is because Mr. Blodget is now there, and because, if it did not suit Doctr. Thornton to repair to Georgetown immediately I could not be present at the meeting. In the Packet enclosed I have written to the Secretary of State to have the matter fully investigated before him and to report the result that a plan being fixed upon the foundation may be begun and in forwardness by the Sale.

I think it reasonable that the necessary expences of your journey should be borne by the public, and if circumstances render it improper, or inconvenient for both of you to go, that one ought to do it; but both would be best as every light and understanding of the subject ought to be had as the decision must be final and ought to be prompt. I am etc.

**To THE PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT, AND MANAGERS OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE
ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE AT ALEXANDRIA**

Mount Vernon, July 1, 1793.

Gentlemen: The very polite invitation which you have given me in the name of the Citizens of Alexandria, to celebrate with them the approaching Anniversary of American Independence, is received by me as a mark of attention meriting my warmest thanks, and as the best proof I can give of my feelings on the occasion will be to accept the invitation, I shall accordingly have the pleasure of meeting them at Alexandria on the 4 instant. I am etc.¹

1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JONATHAN TRUMBULL

(Private)

Philadelphia, July 17, 1793.

Dear Sir: I have duly received your letter of the 8 inst: enclosing papers respecting our unfortunate Citizens, Captives in Algiers, and now return them to you with my thanks for your attention in communicating them.

In all our attempts to accomodate

matters with the Algerines, and to relieve our Citizens holden in captivity by them, we have been peculiarly unfortunate. Besides the deaths of Captn. Paul Jones and Mr. Barclay, many other untoward circumstances have occurred in that business to prevent it's being brought to a point; but I believe it is unnecessary to say to you, my dr. sir, that no measure, which it has been in my power to pursue, in order to terminate that matter favourably, has been left untried, and things are now in the best train for effecting that purpose, that circumstances will admit of. With very great regard, I am etc.¹⁹

19. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On July 17 Lear wrote to Charles Feurer, then at Dumfries, Va., explaining why it is impossible to comply with his request for a copy of a letter. Lear's letter is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*. Feurer's request is not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

On this same day (July 17) Washington wrote to Patrick Miller, near Dumfries, Scotland, thanking him for the present of Miller's work on naval architecture. This letter is also entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

To REVEREND JEDIDIAH MORSE

Philadelphia, July 17, 1793.

Revd. Sir: I should, at an earlier moment, have acknowledged the receipt of your polite letter of the 25 of June, and returned my best thanks for the acceptable work which accompanied it, had I not been at Mount Vernon when they reached this place.

You will therefore be pleased, sir, now to accept thanks and acknowledgements which are due for your polite attention in sending me a sett of *The American Universal Geography*, and at the same time be assured you have my best wishes that you may be amply rewarded for the time and labour spent in producing so useful a work. I am etc.

To GOVERNOR HENRY LEE

(Private)

Philadelphia, July 21, 1793.

Dear Sir: I should have thanked you at an earlier period for your obliging letter of the 14th. ulto. had it not come to my hands a day or two only before I set out for Mount Vernon; and at a time when I was much hurried, and indeed very much perplexed with the disputes, memorials and what not, with which the Government were pestered by one or other of the petulant representatives of the powers at War: and because, since my return to this City (nine days ago) I have been more than ever overwhelmed with their complaints. In a word, the trouble they give is hardly to be described.

My journey to and from Mount Vernon was sudden and rapid, and as short as I could make it. It was occasioned by the unexpected death of Mr. Whirring (my manager) at a critical season for the business with wch. he was entrusted. Where to supply his place, I know not; of course my concerns at Mount Vernon are left as a body without a head; but this by the bye.

The communications in your letter were pleasing and grateful; for, although I have done no public act with which my mind upbraids me, yet it is highly satisfactory

to learn that the things which I do (of an interesting tendency to the peace and happiness of this Country) are generally approved by my fellow Citizens. But, were the case otherwise, I should not be less inclined to know the sense of the people upon every matter of great public concern; for, as I have no wish superior to that of promoting the happiness and welfare of this Country, so, consequently, it is only for me to know the means to accomplish the end, if it be within the compass of my powers.

That there are in this, as well as in all other Countries, discontented characters, I well know; as also that these characters are actuated by very different views: Some good, from an opinion that the measures of the General Government are impure: some bad, and (if I might be allowed to use so harsh an expression) diabolical; inasmuch as they are not only meant to impede the measures of that Government generally, but more especially (as a great mean towards the accomplishment of it) to destroy the confidence, which it is necessary for the people to place (until they have unequivocal proof of demerit) in their public servants; for in this light I consider myself, whilst I am an occupant of office; and, if they

were to go further and call me their slave, (during this period) I would not dispute the point.

But in what will this abuse terminate? The result, as it respects myself, I care not; for I have a consolation within, that no earthly efforts can deprive me of, and that is, that neither ambitious nor interested motives have influenced my conduct. The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and well pointed, never can reach the most vulnerable part of me; though, whilst I am *up* as a *mark*, they will be continually aimed. The publications in Freneau's and Beeche's papers²⁸ are outrages on common decency; and they progress in that style, in proportion as their pieces are treated with contempt, and are passed by in silence, by those at whom they are aimed. The tendency of them, however, is too obvious to be mistaken by men of cool and dispassionate minds, and, in my opinion, ought to alarm them; because it is difficult to prescribe bounds to the effect.

The light in which you endeavored to place the views and conduct of this Country to Mr. G—;²⁹ and the sound policy thereof, as it respected his own, was, unquestionably the true one, and such as a man of penetration, left to himself, would most certainly have viewed them in; but mum on this head. Time may unfold more, than prudence ought to disclose at present.

28. Philip Freneau's *National Gazette*, Philadelphia, and Benjamin Franklin Bache's *General Advertiser*, Philadelphia.

29. Genet.

As we are told, that you have exchanged the rugged and dangerous field of Mars, for the soft and pleasurable bed of Venus,³⁰ I do in this, as I shall in every thing you may pursue like unto it good and laudable, wish you all imaginable success and happiness being, with esteem &c.³¹

To CALEB GIBBS

Philadelphia, July 21, 1793.

Dear Sir: When your letter of the 15 ulto. came to this place I was in the act of setting off for Virginia on urgent private business of my own, and since my return, that of a public nature has engrossed all my time.

I write to you now, because you have requested an acknowledgement of your letter, not because there is any place vacant (known to me), or, that I would be under any promise, if there was. I have observed an invariable line of conduct in all nominations to office, and that is to hold myself entirely free from all

30. Lee married, June 18, 1793, Ann Hill Carter, of "Shirley."

31. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

engagements until the moment shall arrive when it is necessary to make them, and then to do it with the fittest character, from the best evidence before me, without regard to private friendship or other considerations that might warp my public judgment.

It would give me, and I am sure it would also give Mrs. Washington, much pleasure to hear that you and family were living comfortably and doing well, being, Dear Sir, etc.²⁶

To THE JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT³⁵

Philadelphia, July 23, 1793.

Gentlemen: The circumstances which had induced me to ask your counsel on certain legal questions interesting to the public, exist now as they did then; but I by no means press a decision whereon you wish the advice and participation of your absent brethren. Whenever, therefore, their presence shall enable you to give it with more satisfaction to yourselves, I shall accept it with pleasure.³⁶ With sentiments of high respect, I am &c.³⁴

26. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

35. John Jay, chief justice; James Wilson, James Iredell, and William Paterson, associate justices.

36. The answer of the justices is not now found in the *Washington Papers*. It is printed in *Corres. and Public Papers of John Jay*, by H. P. Johnston (vol. 3, p. 487).

34. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, July 25, 1793.

Gentlemen: I enclose, for your information, the copy of a letter from the Secretary of State to me, on the subject of the objections made to Doctor Thornton's plan of a Capitol. By this letter you will see, that after a candid discussion, it was found that the objections stated, were considered as valid by both the persons chosen by Doctor Thornton as practical Architects and competent judges of things of this kind; and one of them (Mr. Carstairs³⁸) who appeared to have studied the matter with most attention, pronounced them irremediable without an alteration in some parts of the plan; the other (Colo. Williams) proposed certain methods for obviating some of the objections, but in what manner you will see by the enclosed letter.

The plan produced by Mr. Hallet, altho' preserving the original ideas of Doctor Thornton, and such as might, upon the whole, be considered as his plan, was free from those objections, and was pronounced by the Gentlemen on the part of Doctr. Thornton, as the one which they, as practical Architects, would chuse to execute. Besides which, you will see, that, in the opinion of those

Gentlemen, the plan executed according to Mr. Hallet's ideas would not cost more than one half of what

38. Thomas(?) Carstairs.

it would if executed according to Doctr. Thornton's.

After these opinions, there could remain no hesitation how to decide; and Mr Hoben was accordingly informed that the foundation would be begun upon the plan as exhibited by Mr. Hallet, leaving the recess in the East front open for further consideration. If this meets your ideas the work of that building will progress as fast as circumstances will permit.

It seems to be the wish that the Portico of the East front, which was in Doctor Thornton's original plan, should be preserved in this of Mr. Hallet's. The recess which Mr. Hallet proposes in that front, strikes every one who has viewed the plan, unpleasantly, as the space between the two wings or projections is too contracted to give it the noble appearance of the buildings of which it is an imitation; and it has been intimated that the reason of his proposing the recess instead of a portico, is to make it in one essential feature different from Doctr. Thornton's plan. But whether the Portico or the recess should be finally concluded upon will make no difference in the commencement of the foundation of the building, except in that particular part, and Mr. Hallet is directed to make such sketches of the Portico, before the work will be affected by it, as will shew the advantage or disadvantage thereof. The ostensible objection of Mr. Hallet to the adoption of Doctor Thornton's East front is principally the deprivation of light and air, in a degree, from the Apartments designed for the Senate and Representatives. With very great regard, I am etc.³⁹

39. In the writing of Tobias Lear. From the *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

***To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY**

Philadelphia, August 10, 1793.

Dear Sir: I thank you for giving me the perusal of the letters to you, which are herewith returned. And I pray you to draught, on my behalf, what you may conceive to be a short, but proper and respectful response to the letter of the Chairman,

or to the resolves, or to both as you shall judge best (for they come in a form so unusual that I scarcely know the mode that will be *most* eligible) and let me be furnished therewith tomorrow evening, or early on Monday Morning.

Query. If the introduction of G— C—⁶⁰ in the resolutions, affords a *good* occasion to notice the promptness and efficacy of his aid, and that of *all* the Governors (as far as facts are known to me) where there has been occasion for their exertion; would it not be good policy to make proper mention thereof? Yours etc.⁶¹

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, August 13, 1793.

Gentlemen: I have received your letter of the first instant, enclosing certain communications to you from the Surveyors of the Federal City, dated the 29th and 31st of July, and have duly considered the alterations suggested in said Communications.

With respect to the first alteration proposed, vizt., “to stop S. Carolina Avenue, west of South Capitol, at the public appropriation.” I am perfectly of opinion with you, that the reason given therefor is sufficient to warrant it.

60. Governor Clinton.

61. From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress. (See Washington's letter to Nicholas Cruger, chairman of a meeting of the citizens of New York, Aug. 1793, *post*.)

And as to the second, “to change the place of a small canal or Inlet from the Eastern Branch, from fifth Street east, where it is marked out on the plan, to sixth street,” seems to be very proper for the reasons assigned by the Surveyors; And if, as they say, the ground in fifth Street, where the Canal is marked out, is high, and that in Sixth Street the tide already flows nearly the whole distance of the intended Canal, I think there can be but little doubt of its having been originally intended to be in sixth street, but was missed in laying down the work.

The third Alteration proposed, vizt. “to strike out two short Avenues leading from the Intersection of Massachusetts and North Carolina” seems to require further consideration; for I observe in the plan, that a bridge is marked out across the Eastern branch, leading directly from Kentucky Avenue.

If this is really the best place for a bridge, and one should be ever likely to be built there, I think that Avenue ought to be preserved; and if that, then the other mentioned as making an equal Angle towards the N. Et. must be preserved also. You will, therefore, Gentlemen, be pleased to have the matter respecting the Bridge ascertained, if it be not already done, and let the striking out or not of these avenues depend upon that.

I am glad to find that the Surveyors are so forward in their work as

they say they are; and I hope they will have everything on there part accomplished that is expected from them before the sale. In compliance with your request I will think of some suitable Character to examine your Accts. and expenditure of the public money. With great esteem etc.⁶⁴

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, August 20, 1793.

Gentlemen: This will be handed to you by Mr. James Greenleaf, a native of Boston, who has resided for some years past in Amsterdam, and has lately been appointed Consul for the U. S. at that place.

This Gentleman, I understand, has it in contemplation to make certain proposals to you for building a number of houses in the Federal City, provided he can have lots upon such terms and conditions as may correspond with his interest in the undertaking while it tends, at the same time, to promote the great object of the city. I am persuaded, Gentlemen, that you will listen with attention and weigh with candour any proposals that may promise

64. In the writing of Tobias Lear in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

to promote the growth of the City in the degree that Mr. Greenleaf's undertaking upon the extensive Scale that it has been represented to me, would do. But it will lay with yourselves to decide how far the state of your funds will justify you closing with any proposals that may not tend to give them an *immediate* increase.

It will undoubtedly be essential to Mr. Greenleaf that you should be impressed with just ideas with regard to his means of insuring the punctual performance of any engagements he may enter into, with you (if you shd. come upon any terms with him), and he will therefore undoubtedly take measures to satisfy you on this head. He has been represented to me as a Gentleman of large

property and having the command of much money in this Country and in Europe; but I can say nothing on this head from my own knowledge. Having had occasion to make enquiry respecting him before his appointment to the office of Consul, the Accounts which I received were highly favourable to Mr. Greenleaf, both as to the respectability of his connections in this Country and in Holland (where he married), and as to his own character. And I have reason to believe that if you can find it consistent with your duty to the public to attach Mr. Greenleaf to the federal City, he will be a valuable acquisition. I am etc.⁷⁴

74. The draft, in the writing of Tobias Lear, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

To CHARLES CARROLL, OF CARROLLTON

Philadelphia, August 25, 1793.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 13 instant, recommending Captn. Kilty⁸¹ as a fit person to succeed the late Colo. Ballard in the office of Surveyor of the Port of Baltimore, came duly to hand.

The numerous and respectable applications which have been brought forward for that place is a pleasing evidence of the favourable light in which the offices under our general government are viewed. And the weighty consideration of the advantages which might arise to the public, as well as to those having immediate business with the office, from appointing a person thereto whose situation has naturally led him to acquire a knowledge of the duties of it and of the laws by which it is regulated, has alone enabled me to decide among the respectable applicants. Under this impression, I have appointed Mr. Daniel Delozier, who has acted as Deputy to the Collector, and from the ill health of Genl. Williams, appears to have done a great part of the business of that department from the time of its organization. But the Character of Captn. Kilty and the respectable recommendation with which he is supported would make it a pleasing circumstance to have him employed under the General Government. And as Mr. Davidson, the present Collector

81. John Kilty.

of Annapolis, has given notice of his intention to resign that office, as soon as another person shall be found to supply his place, if Captain Kilty should [think] it for his interest to accept it, I will appoint him thereto with pleasure.

With very great regard I am etc.⁸²

To JOHN EAGER HOWARD

Philadelphia, August 25, 1793.

Dear Sir: It is not my usual custom to answer letters of application for recommendation for an office; because, having made it a point to keep myself free from any colour of engagement so long as an office may be vacant, I have thought it best to say nothing that might raise the expectation or depress the hope of the Candidates. But so numerous and respectable have been the applications and recommendations for the office of Surveyor of the Port of Baltimore, that I have thought a deviation from my general rule might not be improper in the present instance.

I have been induced to appoint Mr. Daniel Delozier to the office of Surveyor of Baltimore, from the consideration, that, in addition to the Strong and respectable

82. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

recommendation forwarded by him, he must, from the station he has held for a long time as deputy to the Collector of that port, have a very competent acquaintance with the duties of a Surveyor and an accurate knowledge of the laws by which the office is to be regulated, which circumstances will undoubtedly be advantageous to the public as well as to those who may be immediately concerned in the exercise of its⁸⁵ But the weighty recommendations produced in behalf of Captn. Kilty would make it a pleasing circumstance to have the Gentleman employed in the General Government, and as the present Collector of Annapolis intends resigning his place as soon as another person may be found to fill it, if Captain Kilty will accept that office, it will give me pleasure to appoint him to it. I am etc.

P. S. In case of Captain Kilty's declining to accept the office of Collector of Annapolis, you will oblige me by enquiring of the friends of Mr. John H. Purveyance⁸⁶ (who I understand is now on a voyage to the West Indies) if it is likely that he would accept that place and letting me know the result of your enquiries. This Gentleman was warmly recommended

85. Left blank in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

86. Purviance.

for the office of Surveyor of Baltimore, and I felt a very strong inclination to have served him on account of the service which his late father rendered to this Country in the late War and the unpleasant situation in which he left his family, as well as on Acct. of the merits of the young Gentleman himself. Capt. Plunket⁸⁷ appears to have been his particular friend in bringing forward his late recommendations and would be likely to know which would be agreeable to him in the present Case.⁸⁸

To GOVERNOR WILLIAM MOULTRIE

Philadelphia, August 28, 1793.

Dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 11th of the last month.

Having conceived an opinion highly favorable to General Pickens, I invited him to repair to this city, in order that I might obtain from him such facts and information as would be essential to an offensive expedition against the refractory part of the Creek Nation, whenever Congress should decide that measure to be proper and necessary. The Constitution vests the power of declaring war with Congress; therefore no offensive expedition of importance can be undertaken until after

87. Capt. David Plunket, of Baltimore, Md.

88. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

they shall have deliberated upon the subject, and authorized such a measure.

It is essential (which is communicated to you on confidence) that under the present circumstances, it is not improbable but that an offensive Creek war might bring on a war with an European power, whose possessions are in the neighbourhood of the Creeks.

From recent information from Mr. Seagrove, it would appear, that a considerable portion of the Creeks, particularly the upper Creeks, were determined to make satisfaction for the injuries which have been done by that nation; but the bearers of this message were killed by a party of militia, the consequences of which, time will develope.

I have had just reason to be satisfied with the information of General Pickens, and, if the time shall arrive when an expedition shall be directed, I shall be greatly gratified by his taking an eminent part therein. I have the honor etc.⁹⁵

95. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JAMES McHENRY

Philadelphia, August 28, 1793.

Dear Sir: I have been favoured with your letter of the 11 of this month, and thank you very cordially for the information contained in it. I have also received your letter of the 9 instant, recommending Mr. J. H. Purviance to fill the office of Surveyor of the Port of Baltimore. And altho' you know it is not my custom to answer letters, of this discription; yet, in the Present Occasion I have thought it proper to observe to you, that knowing the very decided part which this Gentleman's Father took in our Revolution, his perseverance in the cause, the services rendered by him to our Country, and the disagreeable situation in which he left a worthy family, I felt a strong inclination to have served Mr. Purviance in the Present instance on these Accounts; as well as on Account of his own merits and qualifications, which from the testimonies produced are undoubtedly great, but as the several offices in the Revenue department in our large Ports were intended in a great measure, as a check on each other, and one of the Offices in Baltimore being already filled by an Uncle of this Gentleman, I concluded,

upon the fullest consideration of the subject, that the appointment of Mr. J. H. Purviance to the office of Surveyor, might possibly give rise to insinuations not very favourable to the Gentlemen themselves or to the Government. Altho' I am fully persuaded myself that, in the case alluded to, no collusion would ever happen.

The office of Collector of Annapolis will require a new appointment as soon as a person properly qualified can be found to accept it. Captn. Kilty was strongly recommended for the office of Surveyor of Baltimore; but that place being filled by another, I informed Colo. Howard, who had written to me in behalf of Captn. Kilty, that, if he would accept the office of Collector of Annapolis, I would appoint him thereto, and mentioned, that, in case Captn. Kilty should decline, the office, then I should wish to appoint Mr. J. H. Purviance thereto, provided his friends thought it would be an object worth his attention. I am etc.⁹⁴

94. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, August 29, 1793.

Gentlemen: I enclose you an Estimate of the cost of the Capitol for the Federal City upon Mr. Hallet's plan, calculated in the Philada. prices by Mr. Carstairs, one of the Architects brought forward by Dr. Thornton on the late occasion of discussing the objections offered to his plan. Altho' it may not be proper to rely entirely upon this Estimate; yet it will probably be found a very useful document in going on with the work.

In contemplating characters suitable to inspect your accounts, agreeably to your request, I have thoughts of appointing Capt. Conway,⁹⁶ of Alexandria, and Major John Ross, of Bladensburg; they having struck me as Gentlemen very competent to the business in every respect, and believing them to be as little interested in the objects for which the expenditures have been made, as any proper characters in that quarter would be likely to be. on the latter point, however, you are better able to judge than I am, and will let me know if any objection could arise on that head: and in case there should be none, I will let those Gentlemen know my wishes for them to undertake the business, as soon as I hear from you. In the mean

96. Capt. Richard Conway.

time it may be well for you to inform me how long it will probably take to amine the accounts; and whether it would be best to have it done during your meeting, or at any other time, that I may let the Gentlemen know these circumstances, upon which perhaps will depend their accepting or declining the appointment; and also whether, as the business is of a public nature, it would be expected that compensation should be made for the time or trouble of executing it.

Query. In what manner would it be proper to state the accounts with the States of Virginia and Maryland, they having advanced money which have, not been all expended on the objects for which they were appropriated?

I propose, if the situation of public business will permit, to leave this place for Mount Vernon about the 14 of next month. With very great regard, I am etc.⁹⁷

To JAMES M. ADAIR

Philadelphia, September 4, 1793.

Sir: I have recd. your letter of the 31st ulto. from New York enclosing one from Sr. Edwd. Newenham, also the magazines, the Packet from St. John Sinclair &c. for your care

97. In the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge in *Letters of the President of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

and attention in forwarding them I beg you to accept my thanks.

Any civilities which it may be in my power to shew you while you remain in this Country, will give me Pleasure. I am etc.⁸

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, September 9, 1793.

Gentlemen: I have duly received your letter of Sep. 5. and in consequence thereof have authorised mr. David Ross of Bladensburg, and Colo. Robert Townshend Hooe of Alexandria, to examine the accounts and vouchers of the expenditure of the monies appropriated to your trust as Commissioners of the public buildings of the federal territory, and to certify to me the result.²² I am etc.²³

8. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

22. On September 9 Washington wrote to Ross and Hooe requesting them to audit the accounts. The draft, in the writing of Jefferson, is also in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers*.

23. The draft, in the writing of Thomas Jefferson, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

***To EDMUND PENDLETON**

Mount Vernon, September 23, 1793.

My dear Sir: With very sincere pleasure I received your private letter of the 11th. instant.⁴⁷ This pleasure was not a little enhanced by your reiterated assurance of my still holding that place in your estimation which, on more occasions than one, you have given me the most flattering testimony, highly gratifying to my mind. This assurance came opportunely, as I had begun to conceive (though unable to assign a cause) that some part of my public conduct, however well meant my endeavors, had appeared unfavorable in your eyes, for you will please to recollect that, formerly you promised me, and I always expected, an annual letter from you. It is now (if my memory has not failed me) at least four years since I have had that pleasure.

Sequestered you say you are, from the World, and know little of what is transacting in it but from Newspapers. I regret this exceedingly. I wish you had more to do on the great theatre; and that your means of information were co-equal to your abilities, and the disposition I know you possess to judge properly of public measures. It would be better perhaps for that public it should be so; for be assured we have

47. Pendleton had written: "I find however that the Officer at the head of the Fiscal department stands charged by some Members from hence, with misapplication of the public money....I am an utter stranger to the Gentn. at the head of that department, and pretty much so to the detail of his Conduct, but I will confess to you Sir, that all his reports on Ways and means, From that on the Funding System to the present day have impressed me with an Idea of his having made the System of the british Ministry the model of his conduct as assumed American Primate; chusing rather to trust to a moneyed Interest, he has created, For the Support of his measures, than to their rectitude. I do'nt say these were his motives, but such they appear to me, and I fear we shall long feel the effects of the System if it were now to be changed, wch. it is supposed would be improper, at least as to the Funding System.

"The Non-discrimination he so much laboured, appeared to me a Sacrifice of the substance of Justice to its shadow; its effects to throw unearned wealth into a few unmeriting hands, instead of diffusing it (after repaying them their purchase money) to those who entitled themselves to it by the most Meritorious consideration. The Assumption of the State debts in a lump before it was ascertained that they were created for common benefit (which would make them an equitable charge on the Union), seemed to me unaccountable, unless derived from the Secretary's position that increase

of public debt is beneficial; a maxim adopted by the British Cabinet, but unsupported by reason or other example, and its National effects there strangely misrepresented.

"The various kinds and Value of the new Certificates, I see inconveniences in, but can discover no other reason for, than to give the rich Speculators at or near the Seat of Government an advantage over the distant, uninformed, unwary or distressed Citizens; and the recommended irredeemable quality, as a means of increasing their Credit in circulation, is a paradox of which no Solution has yet Occurred to my mind." Pendleton's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

some infamous Papers, calculated for disturbing if not absolutely intended to disturb, the peace of the community.

With respect to the fiscal conduct of the Secretary of the Treasury I will say nothing; because an enquiry, more than probable, will be instituted next Session of Congress into some of the Allegations against him, which, eventually, may involve the whole; and because, if I mistake not, he will seek, rather than shrink from, an investigation. A fair opportunity will then be given to the impartial world to form a just estimate of his Acts, and probably of his motives. No one, I will venture to say, wishes more devoutly than I do that they may be probed to the bottom, be the result what it will.

With the most scrupulous truth I can assure you, that your free and unreserved opinion upon any public measure of importance will always be acceptable to me, whether it respects men, or measures; and on no man do I wish it to be expressed more fully than on myself; for as I can conscientiously declare that I have no object in view incompatible with the Constitution, and the obvious interests of this Country, nor no earthly desire *half* as strong as that of returning to the walks of private life, so, of consequence I only wish whilst I am a Servant of the public, to know the Will of my masters, that I may govern myself accordingly.

You do me no more than Justice when you suppose that from motives of respect to the Legislature (and I might add from my interpretation of the Constitution) I give my Signature to many Bills with which my Judgment is at variance. In declaring this, however, I allude to no particular Act. From the nature of the Constitution, I must approve all the parts of a Bill, or reject it in toto. To do the latter can only be Justified upon the clean and obvious ground of propriety; and I never had such confidence in my own faculty of judging as to be over tenacious of the opinions I may have imbibed in doubtful cases.

Mrs. Washington who enjoys tolerable good health joins me most cordially in best wishes to you and Mrs. Pendleton. I wish you may live long, continue in good health, and end your days as you have been waring them away, happily and respected. Always, and most affectionately I am &c.

[MS.H.S.]

To JOSEPH HARPER & CO.

Mount Vernon, September 27, 1793.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 10th. instant enclosing a Memorial dated the 9th., never came to my hands until yesterday.

I shall transmit both to the Secretary of State, to whom it would have been more regular for you to have applied in the first instance.

The proofs will be necessary for his inspection and information (if the matter has not been acted upon by the American Minister at Paris) that he may be enabled to report the case fully for my consideration.⁵⁹

To WILLIAM W. BREWEN

Mount Vernon, September 29, 1793.

Sir: A letter from you of the 20th. instant has been received, Stating the distressed and truly affecting situation in which you are. Could my ability to do it, keep pace with my sincere desire to relieve the wants of the distressed, the request made in your letter to me would be

59. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On September 27 Washington forwarded this letter and memorial to the Secretary of State in a brief note, a photostat of which, through the kindness of E. F. Bonaventure, of New York, is in the *Washington Papers*.

chearfully complied with; but the numerous and pressing calls upon me for pecuniary aid from real objects of charity, and from those who are more immediately within my own knowledge are such

that I am under the *necessity*, however repugnant to my feelings, of declining to comply with your request but I can have no doubt however that all those who are acquainted with your merits and knowing to the circumstances as stated in your letter would readily contribute to make up such a sum as you require to commence business with. Sincerely wishing that you may find means to extricate yourself from your present embarrassments, as represented in your letter. I am etc.⁶⁰

60. On September 29 Dandridge wrote a similar letter for the President to a Jonathan Shaw. Both letters are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mount Vernon, September 30, 1793.

Dear Sir: The continuation, and spreading of the malignant fever with which the City of Philadelphia is vested, together with the absence of the heads of Departments therefrom, will prolong my abode at this place until about the 25. of October at, or about, which time I shall, myself, (if the then state of things should

render it improper for me to carry my family) set out for that City, or the vicinity, say German Town.

I shall be obliged to you therefore, if you remain at your Post, which I by no means wish you to maintain at the hazard of taking the fever, to keep me advised of the existing state of things in that quarter, and more over that you would be so obliging (if it should be thought unsafe for me to go into my own house in the City at the time abovementioned) to enquire whether a tolerably convenient lodging for myself, one Gentleman of my family, with three Servants and as many horses could be had in or near German Town. To prevent any misunderstanding of my meaning, I declare explicitly, that it is hired lodgings *only* I will go into, for, unless such can be had, I would repair to one of the most decent Inns.⁶¹

I have given notice to the heads of departments of these my intentions, requesting their attendance accordingly. The time and Place mentioned.

Have you ever examined with attention, and with an eye to the case, whether the Constitution, or Laws of the Union, give power to the Executive to change the place of meeting of the Legislature in cases of emergency in the recess? for example, whether the spreading of the fever which is so fatal in Philadelphia, thereby endangering the

61. The house occupied by Washington in Germantown is stated by W. S. Baker to have been owned by Col. Isaac Franks. It was on Germantown Avenue, about 6 miles northwest of Independence Hall, in Philadelphia. Rev. J. B. Stoudt states that the President occupied the first floor of Rev. Lebrecht Herman's parsonage as an office.

lives of the members who might assemble there the first Monday in December next, is a case that would come under any provision in either. If you have not, I pray you to do it, and give me the result of your opinion.

Mr. Jefferson upon a superficial view of the subject, when here, thought there was no power in either to do this; but the Laws were not examined carefully, and the Constitution is, I believe, silent respecting it. Mrs. Washington joins me in best wishes for you, Mrs. Randolph, and family. I am etc.⁶²

62. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To GOVERNOR THOMAS SIM LEE

Mount Vernon, October 13, 1793.

Sir: The Letter with which your Excellency was pleased to favor me, dated the 7 inst: was received on the 10, and might have been acknowledged the next day; but I waited the arrival of Friday's mail in hopes that I should have had a report

from the Secretary of War relatively the Ship Rochampton. Disappointed in this, I am not able to give any opinion thereon, uninformed as I am of the specific articles of charge which have been exhibited by the British Consul. The French minister complains of the detention.

With respect to the second case mentioned in your letter, and those of the British Consuls, I have only to observe that as these Gentlemen are not ignorant, that the Custom-house officers in every port are instructed to keep a vigilant watch upon all armed vessels, and the presumption being that they also are not inattentive, there seems to have been no necessity for lodging a complaint unaccompanied with proofs.

It is scarcely possible to give instructions which will embrace every case minutely that may arise during the war; nor do I conceive it essential. Your Excellency will readily perceive by the communications which have been made to you, the *principles* upon which the General Government

act in the recess of Congress, respecting the belligerent powers. These principles are to adhere strictly to treaties, according to the plain construction and obvious meaning of them, and, regarding these, to act impartially towards all the Nations at war. Keeping these principles in view and observing the rules which are founded on them, with your disposition to

do justice and to preserve this Country in peace, I persuade myself you can be at no loss, that your decisions will be always right, and I hope they will always be prompt.

Being removed from the public Offices, intending when I left Philadelphia not to be absent from that City more than fifteen or eighteen days, I brought no public papers of any sort (not even the rules which have been established in these cases,) along with me; consequently am not prepared at this place to decide points which may require a reference to papers not within my reach. but as I find cases are daily occurring which call for attention and decision, I have requested the Heads of Departments to attend at Philadelphia, or in its vicinity, by the 1st of next month, whither I shall go and be present myself. With great esteem and regard I am &c.

[MD.H.S.]

TO JONATHAN TRUMBULL⁸⁴

Mount Vernon, October 13, 1793.

Dear Sir: I was duly favoured with your letter of the 2d. instant.

The calamitous situation of Philadelphia makes it necessary that some previous steps should be taken with respect to the meeting of Congress. But of what kind is a serious question. That the President has Power by the Constitution to Convene Congress in *extraordinary cases* admits of no doubt, but that he has power to summon them to meet at an unusual place when the Law, has designated the seat of Government is not merely equivocal, but in the opinion of those, with whom I have hitherto conversed, on the subject, absolutely beyond the powers of the Executive. On the 30th. of last month (hearing that the fever rather increased than abated) I wrote to the Attorney General for an official opinion on this point, but have not yet received an answer.

When I left Philadelphia, which was for the purpose of fulfilling a previous engagement of a private nature that made it necessary for me to be at home the 18th. of Sept. I fully expected to return to the City before the end of the month; but

84. Representative in Congress from Connecticut and Speaker of the House in the Second Congress.

the flight of the Clerks from the public Offices which in a manner shut them up, and the head of Departments being also absent, my return has hitherto been delayed. But, public business of various kinds requiring their attendance I (did some time since) desire them to meet me at Philadelphia, or in the vicinity, the first of next month, whither I shall go myself. At the time of my leaving the City with these expectations and till lately, I hoped the fever would be stopped, and the City so purified by the approaching cool Season as to admit Congress with safety by the time appointed. Or, if doubts arose, then for a quorum to adjourn it to some other place. This would have been (for reasons unnecessary to mention) more agreeable to me than to do it, admitting I had power. But as this is not likely to happen unless a very unexpected change should take place, as I have had no opinion yet from the proper Law officer of Government on this head, and, as you know I wish to hear the opinion of my friends upon all difficult and delicate subjects, I would thank you for yours on this.⁸⁵ particularly with respect to the place, under present circumstances least exceptionable. Your letter may meet me at this Place, if it does not, I may find it on the Road, if neither, most

85. Trumbull's letter of October 2 had then reached Mount Vernon. (See note to Washington's letter to the Secretary of State, Oct. 11, 1793, *ante*.)

certainly at whatever place I shall assemble the officers of Government. I am etc.⁸⁶

To JAMES MADISON

Mount Vernon, October 14, 1793.

My dear Sir: The calamitous situation of Philadelphia; and the little prospect from present appearances of its eligibility to receive Congress by the first Monday in Decembr. involves difficulty.

It has been intimated by some, that the President ought, by Proclamation, to convene Congress a few days before the above period, at some other place; and by others, (although in extraordinary cases he has power to convene, yet) that he has none to change the place. Mr. Jefferson when here on his way home, was of the latter opinion; but the laws were not fully examined; nor was the case at that time so serious as it now is. From the Attorney General to whom I have since written on this subject,

86. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

requesting an Official opinion, I have received no answer; nor is it probable I shall do it soon, as I believe he has no communication with the Post Office.

Time presses, and the Malady at the usual place of meeting is becoming more and more alarming. What then, do you think is the most advisable course for me to pursue in the present exigency? Summons Congress to meet at a certain time and place in their legislative capacity? Simply to state facts, and say I will meet the members at the time and place just mentioned, for ulterior arrangements? or leave matters as they are, if there is no power in the Executive to alter the place, legally?

In the first and second cases (especially the first) the delicacy of my naming a place will readily occur to you. My wishes are, that Congress could have been assembled at Germantown (to show I meant no partiality) leaving it to themselves if there should appear no prospect of getting into Philadelphia soon, to decide on what sh'd be done thereafter; but acc'ts say that some people have died in Germantown also, of the Malignant fever. Every death, however, is now ascribed to that cause, be the disorder what it may.

Wilmington and Trenton are nearly equidistant, from Philadelphia in opposite directions; but both are on

the gt. thoroughfare and equally exposed to danger from the Multitude of Travelers and neither may have Chambers sufficet. for the He. of Representatives. Annapolis and Lancaster are more secure and have good accomodations; but to name either, especially the first, would be thought to favour Southern convenience most, perhaps might be attributed to local views; especially as New York is talked of for this purpose. Reading if there are proper conveniences at it would favour neither the Southern nor Northern interest most, but would be alike to both.

I have written to Mr Jefferson on this subject; notwithstanding which I would thank you for your opinion, and that fully, as you see my embarrassment. I even ask more, I would thank you (not being acquainted with forms and having no one with me that is) to sketch some instrument for publication proper for the case you think most expedient for me to pursue in the present state of things, if the members are to be called together as before mentioned. The difficulty of keeping Clerks in the public Offices had, in a manner, suspended business before I left Philada; and the heads of Departments having matters of private concernment which required them to be absent, has prevented my return thither longer than I had intended; but I have now called upon the several Secretaries to meet me there or in the vicinity the first of next month,

for which I shall set out the 27th or 28th of the present.

The accounts from that City are really affecting Two Gentlemen from New York now here (Colonels Platt and Sargent) say they were told at the Swedes ford of Schoolkil by a person who said he had it from Governor Mifflin that by the official report from the Mayor of the City⁸⁹ upwards of 3500 had died⁹⁰ and the disorder by all accounts was spreading, and raging more violently than ever. If cool weather accompanied with rain does not put a stop to the Malady, distressing indeed must be the condition of that City; now almost depopulated by removals and deaths.

I would not have sent you such a scrawl, but really have not time to copy it. I came here to look a little into my own private concerns, but have no time allowed me for this purpose being followed by other matters.⁹¹

***To OLIVER WOLCOTT, JUNIOR**

Mount Vernon, October 14, 1793.

Sir: Lest my last letter to Colo. Hamilton should have met some mischance I send a duplicate, and request your care of it; the necessity for the heads of Departments assembling by the first of next month becoming more and more apparent.

89. Matthew Clarkson.

90. A news clipping pasted to Jefferson's letter to Washington, Sept. 15, 1793, in the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress, gives the total number of deaths in Philadelphia from Aug. 1 to Oct. 11, 1793, inclusive, as 2,237.

91. From the printed text in *Washington-Madison Papers* (McGuire sale, 1892).

Philadelphia or vicinity, is appointed for the purpose, where I shall be myself.

Let me know, I pray you, whether the malady with which Philadelphia is afflicted has extended to German town, or neighbourhood. In a word, I would thank you for precise information on this head, for I have not been able to get any. A letter requiring this of the Attorney General is, I presume, still laying in the Post Office as I have received no acknowledgment of it although written and sent from this the 30th. of last Month.

On the supposition that the Fever in Philadelphia will not have entirely ceased, and the City sufficiently purified by the first of December for Congress to assemble there, what conveniences would Germantown afford for this purpose? thereby superceding the necessity of removing the public Offices to a more distant part. If this also should be conceived an unsafe, or an improper place, what other is contemplated for the residence of Congress next Session? full information of the prevailing sense of those who are best acquainted with the true situation of things in and about Philadelphia would be very satisfactory to me, as our accts. here are so vague and contradictory that we know not what to rely on.

By report Mr. Willing⁹³ (President of the Bank) Mr. Jno. Ross, Mr. Jonathen

93. Thomas Willing.

Sergeant, Mr. Howell,⁹⁴ Colo. Franks,⁹⁵ and many others of our acquaintances have fallen victims to the prevailing malignant fever; that near 4000 have died; and that the disorder rages more violently than ever. Are these things true? I hope you and Mrs. Wolcot keep your health. with esteem and regard I am etc.

[C.H.S.]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1793.

Dear Sir: You will find by the enclosed letter from the Commissioners that Mr. Hallet reports unfavorably of Doctr. Thornton's Plan "on the great points of practicability, time and expence." And that I am referred "to Mr. Blodget, Hoben and Hallet whose verbal information will be better than any we can give you" on which to form ultimate Instructions.

Mr. Blodget I met at Baltimore⁸⁵ in the moment I was about to leave it; consequently I had little conversation with him on the subject referred; but Mr. Hallet is of opinion that the execution of Doctor Thornton's Plan (independent of the cost, which would far exceed our means;

94. Joseph(?) Howell.

95. Isaac Franks.

85. Washington left Philadelphia for Mount Vernon, June 24, and was in Baltimore, June 26.

and the time allowed for the accomplishment of the buildings) is impracticable; or if practicable, would not in some parts answer the ends proposed. Mr. Hoben seemed to concur in this opinion; and Mr. Blodget, as far as I could come at his sentiments in the short time, I was with him approved the alterations in it which have been proposed by Mr. Hallet.

It is unlucky that this investigation of Doctor Thornton's plan, and estimate of the cost had not preceeded the adoption of it: but knowing the impatience of the Carrollsburg interest and the anxiety of the Public to see both buildings progressing; and supposing the plan to be correct, it was adjudged best to avoid delay. It is better, however, to correct the error, though late, than to proceed in a ruinous measure, in the adoption of which I do not hesitate to confess I was governed by the beauty of the exterior and the distribution of the appartments, declaring then, as I do now, that I had no knowledge in the rules or principles of Architecture, and was equally unable to count the cost. But, if there be such material defects as are represented, and such immense time and cost to complete the buildings, it would be folly in the extreme to proceed on the Plan which has been adopted. It has appeared to me proper, however, that before it is laid aside, Justice, and respect to Doctor Thornton, requires,

that the objections should be made known to him and an opportunity afforded to explain and obviate them, if he can.

For this reason, and because Mr. Blodget is in Philadelphia and it might not be convenient for Doctr. Thornton to leave it; I have requested Mr. Hallet and Mr. Hoben to repair without delay to Philadelphia, with all the plans and documents which are necessary to elucidate this subject, and do pray you to get all the parties herein named together, and after hearing the objections and explanations report your opinion on the case and the plan which ought to be executed. Nothing can be done to the foundation until a final decision is had, and this decision ought not to be delayed one moment that can be avoided; because time is wasting fast; because the public expectation is alive, and because the dæman Jealousy may be at work in the lower Town when one building is seen to progress rapidly, and a plan for the other not yet decided on. Whether it be practicable (even at an expence) to call in the aid of any other scientific Character in Philadelphia to assist in deciding this point; or whether there be any thence, is more than I can tell. Your own knowledge of this, and judgment,

will decide. The case is important. a Plan must be adopted; and good, or bad, it must be entered upon. I am etc.⁸⁶

TO THE POSTMASTER GENERAL

Mount Vernon, October 14, 1793.

Sir: The numerous and various reports which I have lately received from people who were not possessed of any *accurate* information with respect to the State of the malignant fever with which Philadelphia is so unfortunately afflicted, and my intention being to return thither, or to its neighbourhood, about the first of next month, have induced me to ask this information from you, and I beg you will advise me as well of the State of the fever in Philadelphia, as whether it has extended itself in its vicinity, German town &c., to which last I have heard it has reached.

Taking it for granted, that the fever will not have entirely disappeared in the City of Philadelphia, and the Place

86. In the writing of Tobias Lear in the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.

become quite purified, so as to admit the members of Congress to meet there, with safety by the first of December, what accommodations could be had for them in Germantown, if it should be free from infection? If however, this place should be thought unsafe or improper, what other has been in contemplation, for the next Session of Congress? Full information of these matters, and of the prevailing sense of those who have had an opportunity of judging and are best acquainted with the true Situation of things, in and about Philadelphia, is what I very much want, as the accounts we receive here are so opposite and unsatisfactory that we know not on which to rely.

By report, we learn, that Mr. Willing (president of the Bank) Mr. John Ross, Mr. Jonathan Sergeant, Mr. Howell, Colo. Franks and many others of our acquaintance have fallen victims to the fatal fever. that near 4,000 have died and that the disorder is more violent than ever. Is this a faithful representation? I hope your family are out of the way of this dreadful contagion, and that you and Mrs. Pickering are well. with esteem and regard I am etc.

P.S. What sort of a place is Reading, and how would it answer for the accommodation of Congress the ensuing Session.⁹⁶

96. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mount Vernon, October 14, 1793.

Dear Sir: Enclosed is the copy of what I wrote to you agreeably to the date, since which I have received yours of the 3d inst., which shews it had not at that time got to your hands.

I sincerely hope your son Peyton is in no danger from the sick person he saw, and that the rest of your family, wherever they be, are in good health. Are you certain that the disorder of which the persons in Germantown died was the real malignant fever of Philada. For every fever now, of which people die in and about that city will be so called. I was in hopes Congress might have assembled at Germantown in the first instance and there taken ulterior resolutions if the City of Philadelphia at the time should be thought unsafe for them to stay in.

I have just received a letter from the Speaker of the late house of Representatives (Trumbull) suggesting the expediency of convening Congress a few days before the first Monday in December at some other place than Philadelphia, in order to avoid the necessity of a quorum of both houses meeting there, similar sentiments I have heard, are entertained by others. Query, what with propriety can the President do under the circumstances which exist?

If the importance, and awfulness of the occasion would justify calling the legislature together at any other place than Philadelphia (on acct. of the calamity with which it is visited) where should it be? This question if German Town is also visited, would involve the Executive in a serious, and decision; Wilmington and Trenton are equidistant from Philadelphia in opposite directions, but both are on the great thoroughfare through the Union, equally liable on that account to receive the Infection, and each, to the members whose distance would be increased, obnoxious. Annapolis is more out of the comn. and has conveniences, but it might be thought that interested and local views dictated the measure. What sort of a Town is Reading, and how would it answer for the purpose of a Session? Neither Northern nor Southern Members would have cause to complain of partiality on acct. of its situation Lancaster would be thought to favour the Southern Members most.

You will readily perceive that if a change of place becomes indispensable not a moment is to be lost in the notification thereof, whether by Proclamation, requiring it, or by a simple statement of facts, accompanied with information that at a certain time and place

(which might be blank days before the 1st of December) I would meet the members in their Legislative capacity, or for the purpose of ulterior arrangements. The latter would I presume be

a novel proceeding, the other an illegal Act, if there is no power delegated for the purpose and either would be food for scribblers; yet, if Philadelphia should continue in its present unfortunate and alarming state something preliminary seems necessary. I wish you to think seriously of this matter; and not only give me your opinion thereon, but accompany it with what you may conceive a proper and formal instrument for publication; for my consideration leaving the place and time blank thereon, but dilated upon in a letter under the seal. views you may take of the subject, especially too as (I have heard but know not on what grounds) that it is made a question by some, whether even the Legislature itself having in this instance fulfilled the powers of the Constitution have now a right to change the places which are established by law. This to me I confess, seems to be a strained construction of the Constitution and is only mentioned to shew that caution is necessary.

The heads of the Departments you will have no opportunity to advise with on this interesting subject, nor do I suppose you will be in the way of seeing professional men of much eminence, otherwise I should request you to know their sentiments on

the legality, or expediency of convening Congress otherwise than in Philadelphia.

My best wishes attend you, Mrs. Randolph and family, and I am etc.⁹²

To GOVERNOR THOMAS SIM LEE

Georgetown, October 16, 1793.

Sir: I have received your Excellency's Letter of the 11 instant.

When the British Vice-Consul at Baltimore exhibits all his proofs respecting the capture of the Brigantine Coningham, a better judgment can be formed than at present, whether this act is an infraction of neutrality. In doing this he ought to make no delay; because there can be no decision before the evidence on both sides is heard.

Three miles will, if I recollect rightly, bring the Coningham within the rule of some decisions; but the *extent* of Territorial jurisdiction at Sea, has not yet been fixed, on account of some difficulties which occur in not being

92. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

able to ascertain with precision what the general practice of Nations in this case has been. With very great esteem etc.⁹⁸

[MD. H. S.]

To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mount Vernon, October 23, 1793.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 14th. only came by the Post of last night, to Alexandria; and this is sent thither to day, that it may go by to morrow's Mail, and thereby reach you as soon as the nature of the case will admit.

As you have given no positive opinion respecting the Power of the Executive to change the place for Congress to meet at, and as it is uncertain what will be the result of this business; I am really at a loss to decide which of the three houses, mentioned in the P: S: to your letter of the above date, would best suit me, or whether either of them would.

If, from the present state of the malady, with which Philadelphia is visited, and there is an unfavorable prospect of its ceasing, Germantown should be thought unsafe,

98. In the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge.

and of course an ineligible spot for Congress to sit in, or meet at, even in the first instance, *any kind* of lodging and board would suffice for the short stay I should have to remain there; especially as all the time, not employed in business with the heads of Departments and yourself, might be spent in little excursions to places at a small distance therefrom; of course all idea of furnishing, and keeping a house myself (being entirely unprovided with Servants or means of any sort) ought to be banished entirely, if it be practicable, and some rooms, even in a tavern, (if I could be retired in them) taken in preference. On the other hand, if my stay there is likely to be of any continuance, then unquestionably Colo. Franks's (if to be had) would suit me best; because more commodious for myself and the entertainment of company; and, next to this, Bensel's.

This is the light in which the matter strikes me, at this distance; but, as you are on the spot, know more precisely than I possibly can do the real state of things, and, besides, have been in the way of

having the various opinions of People on the subject of what Congress ought to do, I would leave much to your Judgment. I shall set out, so as to be in Germantown, or

thereabouts, the first of November, if no difficulties should be encountered on the Road. As there can be but a short interval between your receipt of this letter and my arrival, any place might do for my first reception.

It is not in my power to despatch a servant before me. I shall have but two, neither of which can be spared for such a purpose; these, with five horses, Mr. Dandridge and myself, form the total of my family and equipage. It would be very convenient for me, therefore, to meet a letter from you at Wilmington, that I may know better how to proceed from thence, and where to cross the Schuylkill.

My best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington unites, attend you, Mrs. Randolph, and family; we are glad to hear, that your apprehensions on acct. of Peyton have subsided. With sincere esteem and regard etc.⁵

To STEPHEN MOYLAN

Mount Vernon, October 23, 1793.

Sir: Your letter of the 21st was handed to me last Night. As I expect to

5. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

be in the vicinity of Philadelphia (Germantown I believe) on the first of November I shall decline saying any thing on the subject of your application³ till then. It being my invariable custom to possess myself of the circumstances of every case before I decide on a nomination to the office. With esteem etc.⁴

To RICHARD HENRY LEE

Mount Vernon, October 24, 1793.

Dear Sir: Your favor of yesterday was handed to me upon my return from my usual ride, and almost at the moment I was sitting down with company to dinner, which prevented my acknowledging the

receipt of it by your Servant. I am sorry, I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you and your lady before I return to the Northward, and regret the cause. On Sunday, if I can previously arrange some business that presses, I shall commence my Journey, and, if I can render you any service whither I am going, I should be happy

3. Moylan had applied for the appointment of naval officer to the port of Philadelphia. His letter of October 21 is in *Applications for Office under Washington* in the Library of Congress.

4. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

in doing it.

On fair ground, it would be difficult to assign reasons for the conduct of those, who are arraigning, and constantly (as far as they are able) embarrassing the measures of Government with respect to its pacific disposition towards the Belligerent Powers in the convulsive dispute, which agitated them; but their motives are too obvious to those, who have the means of information, and have viewed the different grounds they have taken, to mistake their object. It is not the cause of France (nor, I believe, of Liberty) which they regard; for, could they involve this Country in War (no matter with whom) and disgrace, they would be among the first and loudest of the clamourers against the expense and impolicy of the measure.

The specimens you have seen of M. G—t's sentiments and conduct in the Gazettes form a small part only of the aggregate; but you can Judge from these to what test the temper of the Executive has been put in its various transactions with this Gentleman. It is probable, that the whole will be exhibited to public view in the course of the next Session of Congress; delicacy towards his nation, has restrained doing it hitherto. The best that can be said of this agent is, that he is entirely unfit for the Mission on which he is employed, unless, contrary to the express and unequivocal declaration of his Country (which I hope is not the case) made through himself,

it is meant to involve ours in all the horrors of a European War. This, or interested motives of his own, or having become the dupe and the tool of a Party formed on various principles, but to effect local purposes, is the only solution that can be given of his conduct. I sincerely wish that Mrs. [Lee] and yourself may soon and effectually recover your health; and with very great esteem etc.⁷

To EDWARD CARRINGTON

Mount Vernon, October 25, 1793.

Dr. Sir: Your Letter enclosing acct. of expence incurred in sending an Express to the Secretary of State is received; and I now enclose you thirteen Dollars and \square , the amount of the acct. transmitted by you. I am very much obliged to you for the dispatch and punctuality with which you forwarded my Letters to the Secretary, and with esteem, I am etc.⁸

7. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

8. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON

Philadelphia, November 27, 1793.

Dr. Sir: Not having the letters at hand, I am unable to refer to dates. But the one with which you were pleased to favor me, dated sometime in September did not reach my hands before I had left this City. Immediately, however, upon the receipt of it (at my own house in Virginia) I put it under Cover to the Secretary of War, with directions to answer it, conformably to the Rules which had been adopted for the government of such cases; but, before my letter got to this place, he had also left it, for Boston. This being a true state of the case, will, I hope, apologize for your being so long without an acknowledgment of the first whilst those of subsequent date have been answered with more promptitude.

When ever it shall be perfectly convenient to you, I would thank you for a statement of our Joint concern in the Mohawk Lands; that is, for Information of what Lots have been sold, and what remain on hand with the number of them. My compliments and best wishes attend you Mrs. Clinton and family, and, with real regard and friendship, I am etc.³³

33. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To ELIAS BOUDINOT

Philadelphia, November 27, 1793.

Dear Sir: I have been duly favoured with your letter of the 12. Instr., and the Pamphlet which accompanied it.³² I am sensible of the honor you have done me in the address, and am grateful for the flattering expression of it. I shall peruse the Sentiments which you have breathed in the Pamphlet with pleasure as soon as my leizure will allow me to read it. At present I am occupied in collecting and arranging the materials for my communications to Congress.

With best wishes for the health and happiness of Mrs. Boudinot and yourself, and, with very great esteem and regard, I am etc.³³

32. Boudinot's oration before the Society of the Cincinnati (1793).

33. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, December 1, 1793.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 3d of last Month came to me by the Post of Yesterday with the George Town mark of the 27th. of November. What caused such delay in forwarding it, you, better than I, can explain. It is to be regretted, for the reason mentioned therein, that it did not come to hand sooner.

I shall not lose a Post in transmitting the enclosed order³⁸ to you and wish it may be in time to produce the desired effect, at the Treasury of Virga.

I am glad to hear your prospect with the Banks will enable you to look forward, with well grounded hope of another vigorous operation next year, without depending upon the offers of Dutch Capitalists. I hope, and expect, that all things will work well. With great, and very sincere esteem etc.³⁹

38. A copy of this order of December 1, to the Treasurer of Virginia, to pay the third installment of the sum granted by the State of Virginia to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

39. From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

***To DANIEL CARROLL**

Philadelphia, December 16, 1793.

Dear Sir: I have been favored with your letter of the 9th and sample of free stone from my Quarry, sent by Mr. Hoban, for which I thank you both; and should be obliged to him for information of the spot from whence it was taken. I always knew, that the River banks from my Spring house, to the Ferry formerly kept by Captn. Posey, were almost an entire bed of free stone; but I had conceived before the late sample came to hand, that it was of a *very soft* nature.

As the quantity, from outward appearances is, in a manner inexhaustable; I should have no objections to an investigation of the Banks by skilful, and orderly people; as the public as well as myself might be benefited by the discovery of a quarry of *good stone* so near the Federal City.

Mr. Greenleaf is, I presume, with you, he left this City for George Town on friday last, he has a plan for the disposal of lots, and building thereon; to which he expressed a wish to receive the sanction of my opinion: I told him, my wish was that all matters of that sort should come to me through the Commissioners; and

was approved by them (after the consideration which I know would be given to any proposition which seemed to have a tendency to advance the growth of the City) would certainly not be discountenanced by me. A similar answer I gave to a suggestion respecting the site for the Hospital in the City; which he seemed desirous of giving grounds *out* of the City in exchange for. My motive for hinting these things to you, in this manner, is that you may understand precisely what passed between us on these subjects. For some reasons which he assigned, he thought a Hospital in the bosom of the City improper and dangerous. I am inclined to that opinion, but really, as I told him, did not recollect that it had been so intended. I remain in haste Yours etc.⁵³

To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

(Private)

Philadelphia, December 24, 1793.

My dear Sir: It was my wish, for many reasons (needless to enumerate) to have retained Mr. Jefferson in administration, to the end of the present Session of Congress, but he is so decidedly opposed to it, that I can no longer hint this to him.

I now wish for your permission

53. From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

to nominate you to it, the office of Secretary of State, and will add, that your compliance would give me pleasure. Mr. Jefferson will quit it the last day of this month and proposes to set out for Virginia a few days afterwards. I am always, &c.⁶⁴

***To THOMAS JEFFERSON**

Philadelphia, January 1, 1794.

Dear Sir: I yesterday received, with sincere regret your resignation of the office of Secretary of State.⁷² Since it has been impossible to prevail upon you, to forego any longer the indulgence of your desire for private life; the event, however anxious I am to avert it, must be submitted to.

But I cannot suffer you to leave your Station, without assuring you, that the opinion, which I had formed, of your integrity and talents, and which dictated your original nomination, has been confirmed by the fullest experience; and that both have been eminently displayed in the discharge of your duties.

Let a conviction of my

64. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

72. A press copy of Jefferson's letter of resignation, Dec. 31, 1793, is in the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.

Edmund Randolph was nominated Secretary of State this same day (January 1) and confirmed by the Senate, January 2.

most earnest prayers for your happiness accompany you in your retirement; and while I accept with the warmest thanks your solicitude for my welfare, I beg you to believe that I always am &c.⁷³

73. From the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.

To THE VICE PRESIDENT

Wednesday, January 8, 1794.

Dear Sir: I would thank you for giving the papers herewith enclosed a perusal, and for the result of it.

I am now deliberating on the measure proper and necessary to be taken with respect to Mr. G—t and wish for aid in so doing; The critical State of Things making me more than usually anxious to decide right in the present case.

None but the heads of Departments are privy to these papers, which I pray may be returned this evening, or in the morning. With very sincere esteem &c.⁷⁴

74. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

In the *Washington Papers* is a paper wrapper dated January, 1794, in Washington's writing as follows: "Whilst the measure, which gave rise to these papers, was under consideration, advice was reed. from our Minister at Paris, that Mr. Genet wd. be immediately recalled which arrested the business in this Stage of it."

***To DAVID STUART**

Philadelphia, January 20, 1794.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 6th. instant came duly to hand. As you appear to have taken a final determination, I can say nothing more on the subject of its disclosure than that it would have been pleasing to me, if it had been convenient to yourselves, that those who began shd. have compleated the work; and not to have left the harvest of your labours to be reaped by others.

As you are better acquainted than I am with characters in the vicinity of the federal City, and with those not so remote as to make an attendance therein inconvenient. Know also the connections of

individuals, in point of interest, with the same; and how far those connections ought to disqualify them for Commissioners; I would thank you for the names of such as in your judgment are most likely to subserve the public purposes. Wishing as I do to make a good choice of successors, every aid I can derive towards the accomplishment of it would be gratefully received.

Well qualified men might perhaps be had in George Town, or among the Proprietors; but how far their local, and perhaps jarring interests and views might

render them unfit for the trust, being questionable, your opinion thereon would be agreeable to Dear Sir Your etc.

To THOMAS JOHNSON

Philadelphia, January 23, 1794.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 23d. Ult. came duly to hand. With regret I perceive your determination to withdraw from the Commission under which you have acted for executing the plan of the Federal City, my wish was, and still is, if it could be made to comport with your convenience and inclination, that it should be changed; or at least suspended: for I should be sorry to see others (coming in at the eleventh hour as it were) reap the fruits of your difficult labours; but if this cannot be, I would thank you for naming (which may be in confidence) such persons as you shall think best qualified to succeed you in this interesting and important business. My limited acquaintance with *convenient* characters does not enable me to do it to my own satisfaction; and even among those, which might happen to present themselves to my view, there might be local circumstances in the way, unknown to me which would render them inelegible in the opinion of the public, for the impartial

execution of the trust reposed. Were it not for this I presume proper Characters might be had in Georgetown, or among the Proprietors of the City; but how far their connections or jarring interests therein, may be a let to such appointments, is worthy of that consideration which you can so well appreciate for my information.

With respect to Mr. Blodget I have not hesitated on former occasions to declare and I think to the Commissioners themselves from the moment his conduct began to unfold itself, that his appointment did not in my judgment answer the end which had been contemplated, at first I was at a loss how to account for a conduct so distant from any of the ideas I had entertained of the duties of a Superintendant, but it appears evidently enough now, that speculation has been his primary object from the beginning.

My letters (if not to the Commissioners, to an individual member I am sure) when compared with the conduct of Mr. Blodget, will shew that he has in no wise answered my expectations as Superintendant for my ideas of these (in the exercise of a competent character, always on the spot with sufficient powers, and fully instructed) were, that it would render a meeting of the Commissioners oftener than quarterly, or half yearly, unnecessary in the ordinary course of the business; cases it is true might occur requiring occasional ones, but these, after the stated meeting were sufficiently promulgated, would very rarely happen. according to these ideas, fixing on a plan, giving the out lines of it

receiving the reports, inspecting the proceedings, examining, the accounts, revising the instructions or furnishing new ones at the periodical meetings is all that appeared to me necessary for the Commissioners to do; leaving to the Superintendant, who ought to be competent thereto and responsible, the execution in detail.

I wish you may have yet seen the worst features in Mr. Blodget's conduct. Finding that he was determined to proceed in his second Lottery, notwithstanding the admonition that had been given him by the Commissioners; that he had actually sold tickets in it, and for Georgia land; I directed the Secretary of State to inform him in explicit terms, that if he did not instantly suspend all further proceeding therein until the sanction of the Commissioners should be unequivocally obtained, I would cause the unauthorised mode in which he was acting to be announced to the public, to guard it against imposition. In consequence he has set out, it is said, to wait upon them; if this be true the result you must know. Little confidence, I fear, is placed in Mr. Blodget and least where he is best known. With much truth, I remain, etc.⁸¹

***To THOMAS JOHNSON**

Philadelphia, February 23, 1794.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 6th. instant came Safe, but not until after it had lain many days in the Post Office in Frederick Town, by the mark thereon.

81. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Your consenting to remain longer in the Commission of the Federal District gave me much pleasure; for although I have no doubt with respect to the accomplishment of the law (establishing the permanent residence of Congress), nor of the execution of the plan of the City; yet a great and

sudden change of the Commissioners appointed to conduct this business is not likely, in my opinion, to produce good, but on the contrary, evil consequences. I am unwilling therefore to hazard any thing that can be avoided on this occasion; especially at a time when matters appear to be progressing fast to a favorable result.

Notwithstanding you have agreed to act longer under the Commission, than you had intended, there will, nevertheless be a vacancy; occasioned by the resignation of Doctr. Stuart; from whose last letters I have no expectation of his remaining in Office after your next meeting. With much esteem and regard I am etc.

[N.Y.P.L.]

***To EDMUND PENDLETON**

Philadelphia, March 17, 1794.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 5th. instt. came duly to hand. I know not from what source a report that, the next associate judge was to be taken from the State of Georgia, could have been derived. Nothing from me, I can venture to

say, gave rise to it; first, because there is no vacancy on *that* bench at present. v.d. because, whenever one does happen, it is highly probable that a geographical arrangement will have some attention paid to it; And (although I do, at all times, make the best enquiries my opportunities afford, to come at the fittest characters for offices, where *my own* knowledge does not give a *decided* preference) because, 3dly., no one knows my ultimate determination until the moment arrives when the nomination is to be laid before the Senate.

My resolution, not to create an expectation, which thereafter might embarrass my own conduct (by such a commitment to any one as might subject me to the charge of deception) is coeval with my inauguration; and in no instance have I departed from it. The truth is, I never reply to any applications for offices by letter; nor verbally, unless to express the foregoing sentiments; lest something might be drawn from a civil answer, that was not intended.

A gentleman of my acquaintance has presented me with a little of the Nankeen cotton with the Seed in it; half, or more, I enclose to you; and it might have been better, perhaps, if I had sent you the other half also; as the climate and soil at Mt. Vernon is too cold, I conceive, for this plant; but it is due to the donor, that I should make an experiment. With very great esteem and regard I am etc.

[MS.H.S.]

***To JAMES DUANE**

(Private)

Philadelphia, March 23, 1794.

Dear Sir: I have been duly favored with your letter of the 10th. instant, from New York.

I am sorry to find by it, that it no longer comports with your convenience to remain judge of that district; and am concerned that ill-health should be the cause of your resigning an Office, the duties of wch. I am sensible require a residence in, or a very constant attendance at, the City of New York.

For the flattering expressions of your letter, and the kind sentiments contained in it, I pray you to accept my best thanks. I wish, sincerely, that relaxtion from business, in ease and retirement, may have the effect you hope. With great esteem etc.

[N.Y.H.S.]

To GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON

(Private)

Philadelphia, March 31, 1794.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 20th. instt. with its enclosures, came duly to hand; and for which you have my particular thanks. As there are those who affect to believe that Great Britain has no hostile intention towards this Country, it is not surprizing that there should be found among

them characters who pronounce the Speech of Lord Dorchester to the Indians to be spurious. No doubt however remains in my mind of its authenticity: but as it is important to be satisfied (as far as the nature of the thing will admit) of the fact, I would thank you for such information as you are enabled to give, respecting this matter.²⁸

How far the disappointments, experienced by the combined powers in Europe, may have wrought a change in the political conduct of G. Britain towards this Country, I shall not take upon me to decide. That it has worn a very hostile appearance latterly, if it has not been so uniformly, no one, I conceive, will be hardy enough to deny: and that Lord Dorchester has spoken the Sentimts. of the British Cabinet at the period he was instructed I am as ready to believe. But, foiled as that Ministry has been, whether it may not have changed its tone, as it respects us, is problematical. This, however, ought not to relax such enquiries on our part into the existing state of things, as might enable us, if matters should come to extremities, to act promptly, and with vigour.

Among these enquiries, it appears important to me to know the present state of things in upper and lower Canada; that is the composition of the Inhabitants (especially in upper Canada); how they stand affected to their Government; What part they would be disposed to act if a rupture between this Country and G. Britain should take place: &ca. The proximity of our settlements from the Northwestern to the North Eastern parts of the

28. Clinton's answer (April 7) is in the *Washington Papers*. He had no doubt of the authenticity of Dorchester's speech.

State of New York with the Lake Ontario and the River St. Lawrence; the strength thereof; and of their neighbors on the other side of the line, Regulars and Militia, especially about Niagara, and Oswego.

As you have, I am certain, a pretty accurate knowledge of many of these matters yourself; and have the means from your acquaintance with characters (on whose adroitness and integrity you can rely) bordering on the British Settlements, to obtain information from others, you would oblige me very much by such communications as relate to the above, or any other points that you may conceive worthy of attention. With great esteem &c.

[N.Y.H.S.]

***To JAMES MONROE⁴⁰**

Philadelphia, April 9, 1794.

Sir: In reply to your letter of yesterday, I can assure you, with the utmost truth, that I have no other object in nominating men to offices than to fill them with such characters as in my judgment, or

(when they are unknown to me) from such information as I can obtain from others, are best qualified to answer the purposes of their appointment.⁴¹

Having given you this assurance, I request, if you are possessed of any facts or information,

40. Senator from Virginia.

41. Monroe's letter of April 8, expressing his opinion that such an appointment would be "not only injurious to the public interest, but also especially so to your own," is represented in the *Washington Papers* by a copy in the writing of William B. Sprague, the original having been abstracted by him previous to those papers coming into possession of the Government.

Previous to writing this letter to Monroe, Washington consulted Edmund Randolph, who advised that the Secretary of State "inform Colo. M. verbally, that his station entitles his communications to attention. That it is presumed, that he has considered and made up his mind, as to the kind of interference, which a senator ought to make in a nomination beforehand: that upon this idea, the President will be ready to afford an interview at a given time. It may be added in the course of conversation, as the opinion of the Secretary, that facts are the principal things to be consulted." Randolph's letter is in the *Washington Papers* under date of Apr. 9, 1794.

which would disqualify Colo. Hamilton for the mission to which you refer,⁴² that you would be so obliging as to communicate them to me in writing.⁴³ I pledge myself, that they shall meet the most deliberate, impartial and candid consideration I am able to give them.

Colo. Hamilton and others have been mentioned, and have occurred to me as an Envoy for endeavouring by negotiation, to avert the horrors of War. No one (if the measure should be adopted) is yet absolutely decided on in my mind; but as much will depend, among other things, upon the abilities of the person sent, and his knowledge of the affairs of this Country. and as I *alone* am responsible for a proper nomination, it certainly behoves me to name such an one as in my judgment combines the requisites for a mission so peculiarly interesting to the *peace* and happiness of this country. With great esteem &c.⁴⁴

42. Envoy extraordinary to Great Britain.

43. Monroe's letter to the President, in reply to this letter, is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. A photostat copy is in the *Washington Papers*.

44. From the *Monroe Papers* in the Library of Congress.

***To RICHARD HENRY LEE**

Philadelphia, April 15, 1794.

Dear Sir: I have been favored with your letter of the 8th. of March from Chantilly.⁶⁰ It did not, however, (by the Office mark thereon) leave Westmoreland Court House until the 16th. of that month. Previously to the receipt of it, the nomination of Mr. Lawrence Muse to the Collectorship of Rappahannock had been made, consequent of strong testimonials in his favor.

The manners of Mr. Fauchet, and of Mr. Genet, the present and former Ministers from France, appear to have been cast in very different moulds. The former has been temperate, and placid in all his movements, hitherto; the latter was the reverse of it in all respects. The declarations made by the former, of the friendly dispositions of his Nation towards this Country, and of his own inclinations to carry them into effect, are strong and apparently sincere. The conduct of the latter is disapproved in toto, by the Government of both. yet, it is *time only*, that will enable us to form a decisive judgment of each; and of the objects of their pursuits.

The British Ministry (as you will have perceived by Mr. Pinckneys letter to the Secretary of State, which has been published) disclaim any hostile intentions towards this Country, in the agency they had in bringing about the truce between Portugal and Algiers; yet, the tenour of their conduct in this business has been such, added to their manœuvres with our Indian neighbours; but more especially with respect to the late orders of the King in

60. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

council, as to leave very unfavorable impressions of their friendship, and little to expect from their justice; whatever may result from that of the interest of their Nation.

The debates, on what are commonly called Mr. Madison's resolutions,⁶¹ which no doubt you have seen (having been published in all the Gazettes) will give you the pro and con of that business more in detail than I could do if my leisure were greater than it is; but these resolutions, like many other matters, are slumbering in Congress; and what may be the final result of them no mortal, I believe can tell.

I learn with regret that your health has continued bad ever since I had the pleasure of seeing you at Shutters hill. Warm weather I hope will restore it: if my wishes could be of any avail, you assuredly would have them. With best respects to Mrs. Lee and the rest of your family, in which Mrs. Washington unites, I am etc.⁶²

To ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

(Private)

Philadelphia April 29, 1794.

Dear Sir: Circumstances have rendered it expedient to recall Mr. Gouvr. Morris from his Mission to the Republic of France. Would it be convenient and agreeable to you to supply his place?⁸¹

An affirmative answer, would induce an

61. These resolutions on commerce were introduced Jan. 3, 1794.

62. From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City.

81. Livingston declined the appointment.

immediate nomination of you, for this appointment to the Senate; and the signification of your sentiments relative thereto, as soon as your determination is formed, would oblige me particularly, as it is not expected that that body remain much longer in session. With very great esteem &c.⁸²

To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

(Private)

May 6, 1794.

Dear Sir: In answering your note of yesterday respecting M. Talleyrand de Perigord, I do not hesitate to declare, that I find it difficult to hit upon a line of conduct towards characters, under the description that Gentleman is. Emigrants, that is satisfactory to my own mind; or more properly,

that is free from exception, by avoiding what might seem to be incivility on one hand, or unpleasant political consequences on the other. I can perceive very clearly, that the consequences of receiving these characters into the public rooms will be driving of the French Minister from them. His visits are much less frequent than they were; and an occurrence on tuesday last (which shall be mentioned when you call here) has left no doubt as to the cause.

A particular introduction of these characters

82. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

(out of the usual course) would, I presume, be more noticed than the reception of them in public. It has become expedient, therefore, in my opinion, that principles should be adopted in these cases (not only for the conduct of the President, but the Executive officers also) by which evils may be avoided, and uniformity observed. What these had best be, deserves consideration.

My wish is, and it is not less my duty, as an officer of the Republic, to avoid offence to powers with which we are in friendship, by conduct towards their proscribed citizens which would be disagreeable to them; whilst, at the same time, these emigrants, if people of good character, ought to understand that they will be protected in their persons and property, and will be entitled to all the benefits of our laws. for the rest, they must depend upon their own behaviour and the civilities of the citizens at large, who are less restrained by political considerations, than the officers of government must be. Yours always.⁸⁷

To ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

Philadelphia, May 14, 1794.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 10th. instant, which came to hand yesterday, appears to place your reluctance to accept the appointment to France, upon the difficulty of making *immediate* arrangements for a permanent residence abroad.²

I have already communicated to you my wish, that you should enter upon the mission: and am desirous of accommodating you in point of time, as far as the public

87. From an attested copy by Octavius Pickering in the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress. (See Washington's letter to the Marquis of Lansdowne, Aug. 30, 1794, *post.*)

2. Livingston maintained his opposition, and on May 27 Washington nominated to the Senate James Monroe, to be United States Minister to France; and William Short to be Minister to Spain, Carmichael being recalled. The Senate confirmed these appointments, May 28.

service will permit.

If therefore such an accommodation will remove your objections; I shall be glad to be informed on the return of the Mail what will be the shortest possible time necessary for your preparation. Your answer will immediately decide me. With very great esteem etc.¹

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, June 25, 1794.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 18th. instant came to me by the Post which arrived in Alexandria on Monday evening. It is not more unusual, than it is difficult, to account for the motives which induce Govr. M 's³⁵ either to antidate, or to detain after they are written, the letters which I receive from him. That there is design in it, admits of little doubt in my mind.

The publication respecting Genl. Wayne, which you will find in the enclosed paper, taken from the Martinsburgh Gazette, is very unpleasant; it is said to be the production of one Glen, or Lynn,³⁶ a resigned Officer; but which, or whether either, of these is the name Doctr. Craik, who gave it to me, was not sure. I am at a loss to decide what notice ought to be taken of such a publication, something, however, on public and private acct., seems to require that he should not be left ignorant of the accusations with

1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the Washington Papers.

35. Gov. Thomas Mifflin, of Pennsylvania.

36. James Glenn (Glen). He was a lieutenant from Berkeley County and had resigned in March, 1794. which he is charged. You will consider the case well and act accordingly.

Going from the Federal City (on Sunday morning)³⁷ to view the Locks, and Canal at the little Falls of Potomac, my horse, whose feet had got very tender from the journey, blundered and continued blundering until by violent exertions on my part, to save him and myself from falling among the Rocks, I got such a wrench in my back, as to prevent me from mounting a horse without pain; of course it has deprived me, in a great degree, of the accomplishment of the purpose of my visit to this place. Whether it will retard my return a few days longer than I had allotted, is more than I am able, at this moment, to decide; it shall not, if I can avoid it without injuring myself. I am etc.³⁸

***To THOMAS JOHNSON**

Mount Vernon, June 27, 1794.

Dear Sir: I regret not having met you at the Federal City, on my way home; and was concerned for the cause of the disappointment.

I have made no choice yet of persons to supply the places of yourself and Doctr. Stuart, as Commissioners; nor, in truth, do I know on whom to fix, for this purpose, at this stage of the business, and under present circumstances.

Mr. Grenleaf gave me some reasons to believe

37. June 22.

38. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

that you were about to become a resident of the Federal City. I was pleased therewith; because it created a hope (that if this should happen) that you might find it convenient to remain in your present Office; and because experience has shewn the expediency of the Commissioners, or one of them at least, residing on the spot.

It is too much, I am satisfied, to expect such attendance and services as they have rendered for their present allowance; nor was it ever intended, by me, to impose so much on them for such compensation. My ideas (as my letters to all, or some of the Gentlemen will prove) always were, that it was the part of a Superintendant to perform what has been done by the Commissioners themselves. But I see a greater difficulty since the trials that have been made than I did before,

in getting a man adequate to this business; and therefore some change in the system seems indispensable.

I cannot, however, think of making any material change in it without placing it at the option of yourself and Doctr. Stuart to avail yourselves thereof altho' he seems resolved from the last conversation I had with him, against continuing at any rate; but suggested an idea which strikes me at first sight favorably, if the Law (which I have not by me to consult, nor would wish to bring before Congress for amendment) would justify the measure. It is, that one of the Commissioners who should be obliged to reside in the City) shall be the acting person; and be well paid for his superintendence and the particular attention he shall give to the business; that at stated periods, or as occasion might require, the other two, whether of the City or

country should attend, and be compensated by the day, or otherwise, according to the trouble, or extent of their services. In this case the funds might afford adequate compensation for actual services; and in this case also, it would be gratifying to me, and I dare say to others, if you would be the resident Commissioner, and Superintendant.

I see but one thing that can be suggested as an objection to such a plan, and that is blending the Offices of Commissioner and Superintendant in the same person; but I can see many advantages that would result from it in the hands of a competent character, on the spot.

If this plan cannot be adopted, some other and better allowance than the present must be made to the three; all or some of whom, must reside in the City. But to allow £600 pr. Annum to each, is more, I conceive, than would meet approbation, although it might not be more than they deserved.

I would thank you for your full and candid sentiments upon the several parts of this letter and as soon as convenient. If I am able from the wrench I got at the lower Falls on Sunday last, to travel, I shall set out for Philadelphia on thursday next. you will be pleased therefore to direct to me here, or there according to the time you may receive this letter. With much esteem etc.⁴⁶

46. From the original kindly loaned by J. Alexis Shriver, of Bel Air, Md., for transcribing.

***To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY**

Mount Vernon, July 2, 1794.

Dear Sir: Your private letter of the 22d. of June came duly to hand, and for the opinion contained in it, I thank you. I always feel sincere gratification from the frankness, and unreserved advice of my friends, whether it coincides with my own sentiments or not.⁵¹

As Congress, to whom the matter was referred, did not (from causes unknown to me) think proper to take up the subject of compensation for British Vessels, captured by the proscribed Privateers of France; and as this is one of the subjects committed to Mr. Jays negotiation, or at least within his powers, I do not feel disposed to make any further, or more pointed declaration to Mr. Hammond on this head, at this time.

My understanding of the original communication of this business to that Gentleman, differs very widely from your interpretation of it. It is well known to the late Secretary of State.⁵² that more than once, I pointedly desired that the expression be so guarded as to convey nothing *more* than an *opinion* of the Executive. This it may be said (and I think) ought to have been, confirmed by the Legislature; but the fact is otherwise: and although the usage of other Nations may be opposed to this practice, the difference may result from the difference between their Constitutions and ours, and from the prerogative of their Executives.

The powers of the Executive of the U. States are more

51. Hamilton had written (June 22): "The Secretary of State in referring to you the question of the answer to be given to Mr. Hammond concerning compensation for certain captured vessels will I presume transmit to you the opinions of the other Gentlemen as well as his own. Besides the reasons hastily sketched in the memorandums given to the Secretary of State, there is one of a delicate nature which I did not think fit to put on a paper which might become a public document but which I think ought to be submitted to your consideration.

"Though the form of only giving the *opinion* of the President that it was *incumbent upon* the U States to make compensation in the case has been used, yet between nation and nation this is equivalent to a *virtual* engagement that compensation will be made; and we were all sensible in advising the President to give that opinion (which advice was unanimous), that a noncompliance with it would be a serious commitment of the character of the Nation, the Government and the *President*. Indeed if the Legislature should not do its part, under such circumstances, it would necessarily give birth to considerations very embarrassing to the delicacy of the President.

"In such a posture of things is it not adviseable to narrow the obstacles to a right issue of the business? If Mr. Jay is instructed to insert a formal *stipulation* in a *general arrangement*, the senate

only will have to concur. If provision is to be made by law, *both houses* must concur. The difference is easily seen. And it is a case where the *point of honor* is too materially concerned not to dictate the expediency of leaving as little hazard as possible upon the issue. It is impossible that any questions can arise about the *propriety* of giving this course to the business. When we are demanding compensation for our captured vessels and goods it is the simplest thing in the world to stipulate compensation for those of great Britain, which we acknowledge to have been unlawfully made within our territory or by the use of our means. It is also with me a material consideration that the coupling this with the other objects of Mr. Jay's negotiation may tend to disembarass in future. If the compensation we seek rafts, it may be a good answer to the claim on the other side, that they were endeavored, without success to be made a subject of reciprocal stipulation. I speak with reference to the Individuals concerned.

"I may be perhaps too *nice*. But this is one of those questions, in which ideas of *sincerity good faith and honor*, in a relation which must always engage my particular solicitude, press my judgment to a course of proceeding which is calculated to dispel all doubts." Hamilton's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

Jay's powers, as noted in the *Journal of the Proceedings of the President*, as signed on May 7, consisted of three separate points: "1. as to the treaty of peace; 2. treaty of Commerce; 3. Vexations and spoliations."

52. Jefferson.

definite, and better understood perhaps than those of almost any other Country; and my aim has been, and will continue to be, neither to stretch, nor relax from them in any instance whatever, unless imperious circumstances shd. render the measure indispensable.

Under this view of the Subject, unless the case was more urgent than I think it the matter (as it respects Mr. Hammond) had better I conceive remain on the footing it now stands; although I have no objection, as I had written to the Secretary of State (before I had received your private letter) that he might be informed informally, and verbally, that the negotiation of this, as well as other matters was transmitted to his own Court. With sincere esteem etc.⁵³

53. From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

On July 2 Washington wrote to the Secretary of State "Tomorrow I commence my journey for the seat of Governmt." This letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*. The *Journal of the*

Proceedings of the President notes that "the President arrived in Philada. from Virginia on Monday 7. July about 5 o'Clock P. M."

***To THOMAS SIM LEE**

(Private)

Philadelphia, July 25, 1794.

Dear Sir: This letter will accompany an official one from the Secretary of State, written to you by my desire. It is unnecessary therefore for me to repeat what is contained in his letter; but I shall express with frankness, a wish that it may comport with your convenience to accept the proffered appointment, provided your health, inclination and habits, would enable you to discharge the duties of the office with activity.

Experience has evinced the propriety, indeed the indispensable necessity, that the Commissioners of the Federal District should reside within the City, or so near to it, as by a daily attendance to see that every thing moves with regularity, œconomy and dispatch. The year 1800 is approaching with hasty strides; equally so ought the public buildings to advance towards completion. The prospect before them, it must be confessed, is flattering; the crisis, nevertheless, is as delicate as it is important. The places of those gentlemen who are retiring from office must be filled with others, of respectability and decision.

For these, and other reasons, the enumeration of which would be more fit for oral than written details, I have contemplated you and Mr. Potts of Frederic Town (to whom the Secretary of State now writes) as the successors of Mr. Johnson and Doctr. Stuart; and to hear that the offer is accepted, would give me pleasure. If this be the case, I shall have many opportunities of filling up the out lines of the communication; if it should not, I have said more than is necessary, already.

Candour, however, requires I shd. add, that the

inducement to giving Salaries to the Commissioners, is, that they should live *in* the City or the *borders* of it; and by doing so, and an arrangement among themselves, the necessity, and of course the expence of employing a general Superintendant of the business, may be avoided.

It has been suggested, and I believe with propriety, that one of the Commissioners ought to be well read in law. This, among other inducements, has brought Mr. Potts more immediately into

my view. The non-residence of the Commissioners in the City, has, I am persuaded, been attended with many disadvantages; and has been the source of those unpleasant disputes between them and the proprietors; the Superintendants; the workmen; &ca. &ca. Their periodical meetings, and intermediate calls, although extremely fatiguing, and oftentimes very inconvenient, have not answered *all* the purposes of their appointment. A primary one being, that of *seeing* their own regulations, and orders, executed in the time, manner and spirit, they were conceived. another, hardly second to the first, is, that by being always on the Spot, they are at hand to embrace offers, and to avail themselves of opportunities which frequently present, but will not wait, not only to purchase materials and to engage artizans, but to interest foreigners and strangers who may view the City, in the purchase of lots; but who, otherwise, know not where to apply; and are unwilling to remain until one of the stated meetings shall revolve; and equally so to call a Special one. With very great esteem etc.

[N.Y.P.L.]

***To THE SECRETARY OF WAR**

(Private)

German Town Friday 8 Oclock PM August 8, 1794.

Dear Sir: Mr. Bradfords letter (which I presume you have seen, and) which was sent to me by Express, conveyed to my mind a different idea than it is now impressed with, from the Secretary of States account of the conversation he has had with Colo. Nevill and Major Lenox. I concluded from the-first (combined with the articles in the morning Gazettes) that the Insurrection West of the Mountains was not only general, but that the Insurgents were on the point of embodying; and would receive no mission. Under these circumstances I could see no propriety in the absence of the Officers of the government; nor how I could stand justified in permitting the measure. But I do not perceive that the Accts. of the Inspector and Marshall place matters in a worse light than they stood before, I consent to your pursuing your plan, and wish you a good journey and a safe and speedy return.⁷⁸ Yours always.

[MS.H.S.]

To GABRIEL P. VAN HORNE

Philadelphia, September 3, 1794.

Sir: In acknowledging the receipt of your Letter of the 26 Ult. to the President of the United States which he has directed me to do, I have to assure you that he is not less pleased at the readiness with which you have tendered your services (should occasion require) in support of the Constitution and laws of our Country, and the laudable Zeal manifested by you; than he is hurt at the cause

78. Knox was on the point of going to Maine.

which has induced you to make this tender. At the same time the President directs me to inform you, that the appointment of Officers to command the Militia which are required to hold themselves in readiness in the different States, does not belong to him, but to the Commanders in Chief of the Militia of the States from which they are called. I am etc.⁸

To JOHN CLARK

Carlisle, October 6, 1794.

Sir: Your favor of the 27th. Ult. was put into my hands in the moment I was leaving the City of Philadelphia and I have had neither leisure or opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of it since till now.

I thank you for your polite offer of attending me to the field, but my going thither or returning to the seat of Government in time for the meeting, Congress depends upon circumstances not within my controul nor of which have I such actual information at present as to enable me to decide.

Nothing short of imperious necessity can justify my being absent from the Seat of Government while Congress is in Session. Under this view of the matter I decline making any establishment of a Sute unless that necessity should when, in the choice of Aids, I must have regard to considerations of different kinds. Yours.²⁴

8. Signed "B. Dandridge" in the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On September 3 Washington wrote briefly to the Secretary of the Treasury: "As I know nothing that calls me to the City to day, I shall not be there until tomorrow; which will be in time for common

occurrences. The contents of the enclosed are agreeable." This note is in the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress and marked "Private" on the address.

24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY**

Philadelphia, October 31, 1794.

Dear Sir: By pushing through the rain (which fell more or less on Saturday, Sunday and Monday) I arrived in this City before noon on Tuesday; without encountering any accident on the road, or any thing so unpleasant than the badness of the ways, after the rains had softened the earth and made them susceptible of deep impression, of the Wheels. How you passed through the Glades after the various accounts we had received of them, in such wet weather, I am at a loss to conjecture; but am extremely anxious to know; as I also am to learn the operations of the Army, and the state and condition of it, since.

Nothing important, or new has been lately received from our Ministers abroad; and although accounts from London to the first of September, and from Ireland of still later date have been inserted in the Gazettes, they are not precise enough to be detailed in a letter. In general however, the French continue to be successful by land, and it might be added by Sea also, for they are capturing a great number of British Merchantmen: Nor does the fate of Robespierre seem to have given more than a momentary stagnation to their affairs. The Armies rejoice at it, and the people are congratulating one another on the occasion.

Mr. Monroe is arrived in France and has had his reception in the midst of the Convention, at Paris, but no letter has been received from him.

Few members have yet come to town. Tomorrow I presume will bring many. The papers say Mr. Trumbull is elected to the Senate, in the room of Mr. Mitchell²⁰ who has resigned; but who has, or will, supply his place in the other house is not mentioned.

Husbands and the other prisoners were safely lodged in this City on Wednesday afternoon. Press the Governors &ca. to be pointed in ordering the Officers under their respective commands, to march back with their respective Corps; and to see that the Inhabitants meet with no disgraceful

insults, or injuries from them. The Secretary of War will, I expect, say something respecting the deposit of the Arms and public stores in *proper* places; to him therefore I shall refer.

Mrs. Hamilton and your family were very well yesterday afternoon. Your letter of the 23d. has been recd. I am always, and Affectly yours.²¹

To THE VICE PRESIDENT

Saturday, November 15, 1794.

Dear Sir: I have not been able to give the papers herewith enclosed more than a hasty reading; returning them, without delay, that you may offer the perusal of them to whom soever you shall think proper.

20. Jonathan Trumbull and Stephen M. Mitchell, of Connecticut.

21. From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

The picture drawn in them, of the Genevese, is really interesting and affecting. The proposition of transplanting the members, entire, of the University of that place to America, with the requisition of means to establish the same, and to be accompanied by a considerable emigration is important; requiring more consideration, than, under the circumstances of the moment I am able to bestow on it.

That a National University in *this* country is a thing to be desired, has always been my decided opinion; and the appropriation of ground and funds for it in the Federal City, have long been contemplated and talked of; but how far matured, or how far the transplanting of an *entire* Saminary of *Foreigners* , who may not understand our Language, can be assimilated therein is more than I am prepared to give an opinion upon, or indeed how far funds in either case are attainable.

My opinion, with respect to emigration, is, that except of useful Mechanics and some particular descriptions of men or professions, there is no need of encouragement: while the policy or advantage of its taking place in a body (I mean the settling of them in a body) may be much questioned; for, by so doing, they retain the Language, habits and principles (good or bad) which they bring with them. Whereas by an intermixture with our people, they, or their descendants, get assimilated to our customs, measures and laws: in a word, soon become one people.

I shall, at any leasure hour, after the Session is fairly opened, have pleasure in a full and free conversation with you on this subject, being, with much esteem &c.³¹

31. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To JOHN JAY**

(Private)

Philadelphia, December 18, 1794.

My Dear Sir: Since writing to you by Mr. Bayard, about the first of November, I have been favored with your letters of the 13th. of September, and 2d. of October. As the sentiments contained in the first of these, respecting the communications of Mr. M—⁵¹ to the National Convention of France, were also transmitted in a *private* letter from you to the Secretary of State, and replied to by him (both of which I have seen) I shall dwell no longer on that subject than just to observe 1st, that considering the place in which they were delivered, and the neutral policy this country

51. James Monroe.

had resolved to pursue, it was a measure that does not appear to have been well devised by our Minister, 2d, Aware of this himself, and that his conduct would be criticised, he has assigned reasons for its adoption; a summary of which are, that the Navy Officers, and Privateersmen of France, who had resorted to our Ports, and had been laid under such restrictions as neutral policy required from us altho' disagreeable to them; had represented this country (and not without effect) as unfriendly to the French revolution; to do away which, he found himself necessitated to counteract them by strong assurances of the good dispositions of the people of these U: States towards that Nation. and 3dly, Although I think with you, that he stepped over the true line, to accomplish this, yet under the then existing circumstances, the expression of such reciprocal good will was susceptible of two views, one of which, even in the pending state of the negotiation (by alarming as well as offending the B. Ministry) might have no unfavorable operation in bringing matters to a happy, and speedy result; Than which nothing is more desirable, or can be more ardently wished for by the friends of peace and good order, in this country.

As the Secretary of State has written to you several times since the receipt of your statement of the Negotiation, on the 13th. of Sept, I shall add nothing to the observations wch. are contained in his letters, on the subject thereof.

The business of the Session, hitherto, has been tranquil, and I perceive nothing, *at this time*, to make it otherwise, unless the result of the negotiation (which is anxiously expected, by all) should produce divisions. As yet no details have been handed to Congress on this subject; indeed no communication of that business has been made to anybody ex[c]ept those about me in the Executive departments.

A paragraph of which the enclosed is a copy,

is running thro' all our gazettes; accompanied with a *report* that the United States are contemplated as Mediator between France and England. To ascertain by what authority the first was inserted, Bache, in whose paper it first appeared, has been called upon by the Secretary of State; but no satisfaction has been obtained from him as yet.^(*)⁵² With respect to the other, it seems to have originated on the other side of the water, and is of a delicate nature; the very idea of which, under the present successes of the French Arms (admitting it should be agreeable to the other power) would, it is conceived, convey unpleasant sensations, and be considered in an evil light, by that nation, unless an intimation to the contrary should first come from them.

The Virginia escheats of British property do not, as I am informed, stand upon the ground, as related to you; but as I am not accurately enough read in the law respecting these escheats to be precise in my recital of it, I will request the Secretary of State to give you the principles thereof.

As I expected, and as you were informed the result wd. probably be, so it has happened; that the western insurrection has terminated highly honorable for this country; wch. by the energy of its Laws and the good disposition of its citizens have brought the rioters to a *perfect* sense of their misconduct without spilling a drop of blood. In the eyes of foreigners among us, this affair stands in a high point of view. With great truth I am etc.

To DANIEL CARROLL

Philadelphia, January 7, 1795.

Dr. Sir: You will consider this Letter as coming from me in my private capacity, at the sametime I do not object to the communication of the sentiments to your colleagues in Office.

52. (*) "Since writing the above, an unsatisfactory explanation has been given." This note, in Washington's writing, is at the bottom of the page.

You will recollect no doubt that I yielded my assent to Mr. Greenleaf's first proposition to purchase a number of Lots in the Fedl. City (altho' I thought the price he offered for them was too low) because matters at that time, seemed to be in a stagnant state, and something was necessary to put the wheels in motion again. To the second sale wch. was made to him, my repugnance was greater, in as much as the necessity for making it was not so apparent to my view, and because another thing had become quite evident, viz: that he was speculating deeply, was aiming to monopolize deeply, and was thereby laying the foundation of immense profit to himself and those with whom he was concerned.

Viewing the matter in this light, you will readily perceive, at the first glance, how much my sentiments are opposed to any more *large* sales, if there be *any other* resource by which money can be obtained to carry on your operations.

The sum which will be necessary to compleat the public buildings and other improvements in the City, is very considerable. You have already, if I mistake not, disposed of more than a moiety of the Lots which appertain to the Public; and I fear not a fourth part of the money necessary for that purpose, is yet provided. The persons to whom you have sold are reselling to others (subjecting them to the conditions to which they are made liable themselves) and this they are doing to an immense profit. Lately, a Gentleman from England, has paid, or is to pay £50,000 for 500 Lots. Will it not be asked, why are speculators to pocket so much money? Are not the Commissioners as competent to make bargains?

The business, I conceive, is now fairly on its legs,

to sell therefore by wholesale faster than is indispensably necessary to keep the machine in proper motion will probably (as property is rising there) be deemed impolitic. And to part with the legal title to the Lots (especially in large sales of them) on personal security, may be hazarding more than prudence will warrant.

For a variety of reasons, unnecessary to be enumerated, tho' some of them are very important, I could wish to see the force of your means directed towards the Capitol in preference to the other public buildings. With great esteem I am etc.⁶⁹

To PIERCE BUTLER

Philadelphia, January 7, 1795.

Sir: The letter with which you were pleased to favor me, dated the 30th Novr. came duly to hand, a copy of which, immediately upon the receipt thereof, I transmitted to the Secretary of War (in whose department the building of the Frigates is) with directions to cause an enquiry into the abuses of which you made a general complaint, and report the result to me.

It would have been satisfactory, and might have contributed essentially to expedite this enquiry if you had been so obliging as to have pointed your information to the particular instances of abuse. I am etc.⁶⁸

69. The draft, in the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

68. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To EDMUND PENDLETON**

Philadelphia, January 22, 1795.

Dear Sir: From a long acquaintance with, and a sincere regard for you, I always feel pleasure in hearing from you, and of you, consequently, your letter of the 30th. ult was an acceptable annuity.

Notwithstanding you have passed your 73 year, whilst you enjoy tolerable health, and retain your faculties in the vigor they are, I wish as well on public, as on private account, that length of days may be added to those which you have already numbered. A month from this day, if I live to see the completion of it, will place me on the wrong (perhaps it would be better to say, on the advanced) side of my grand climacteric; and altho' I have no cause to complain of the want of health, I can religiously aver that no man was ever more tired of public life, or more devoutly wished. for retirement, than I do.

I hope, and believe, that the spirit of anarchy in the western counties of this State (to quell which the force of the Union was called for) is *entirely* subdued; and altho' to effect it, the community has been saddled with a considerable expence, yet I trust no money could have been more advantageously

expended; both as it respects the internal peace and welfare of *this* country, and the impression it will make on *others* . The spirit with which the Militia turned out, in support of the Constitution, and the laws of our country, at the sametime that it does them immortal honor, is the most conclusive refutation that could have been given to the assertions of Lord Sheffield,⁸⁵ and the prediction of others of his cast, that without the protection of G. Britain, we should be unable to

85. John Baker Holroyd, Earl of Sheffield. He had published shortly after the treaty of peace, in 1783, his *Observations on the Commerce of the American States*.

govern ourselves; and would soon be involved in anarchy and confusion. They will see that republicanism is not the phantom of a deluded imagination: on the contrary, that under no form of government, will laws be better supported, liberty and property better secured, or happiness be more effectually dispensed to mankind.

The successes of our Army to the westward has, already, been productive of good consequences. They have dispelled a cloud which lowered very heavily in the northern hemisphere (the six nations); and tho' we have received no direct advices from General Wayne since November, there is reason to believe that the Indians with whom we are, or were, at war in that quarter, together with their abettors, begin to see things in a different point of view; but what effect these favorable changes may have on the Southern Indians, it is not easy, at this moment, to decide.

I accord fully in my opinion with you, that the plan of annual presents in an abstract view, unaccompanied with other measures, is not the best mode of treating ignorant Savages, from whose hostile conduct we experience much distress; but it is not to be overlooked, that they, in turn, are not without serious causes of complaint, from the encroachments which are made on their lands by our people; who are not to be restrained by any law now in being, or likely to be enacted. They, poor wretches, have no Press thro' which their grievances are related; and it is well known, that when

one side only of a Story is heard, and often repeated, the human mind becomes impressed with it, insensibly. The annual presents however, which you allude to, are not given so much with a view to purchase peace, as by way of retribution for injuries, not otherwise to be redressed. These people are very much irritated by the continual pressure of land speculators and settlers on one hand; and by the impositions of unauthorised, and unprincipled traders (who rob them in a manner of their hunting) on the other. Nothing but the strong arm of the Union, or in other words, energetic laws, can correct these abuses; but here! jealousies, and prejudices (from which I apprehend more fatal consequences to this government than from any other source) aided by local situations, and perhaps by interested considerations, always oppose themselves to efficient measures.

My communications to Congress at the last and present Session, have proceeded upon similar ideas with those expressed in your letter, namely, to make *fair* treaties with the Savage tribes, (by this I mean, that they shall *perfectly* understand every article and clause of them, from correct and repeated interpretations); that these treaties shall be held sacred, and the infractors on either side punished exemplarily; and to furnish them plentifully with goods under wholesome regulations, without aiming at higher prices than is adequate to cover the cost, and charges. If measures like these were adopted, we might hope to live in peace and amity with these borderers; but not whilst our citizens, in violation of law and justice,

are guilty of the offences I have mentioned, and are carrying on unauthorised expeditions against them; and when, for the most atrocious murders, even of those of whom we have the least cause of complaint, a jury on the frontiers, can hardly be got to listen to a charge, much less to convict a culprit.

The madness of the European powers, and the calamitous situation into which all of them are thrown by the present ruinous war, ought to be a serious warning to us, to avoid a similar catastrophe, as long as we can with honor and justice to our national character. What will be the result of Mr. Jay's mission, is more than I am able, at this moment, to disclose. Charged as he has been with *all* matters in dispute between the two countries (not, as has been insinuated in some of the Gazettes, *merely* to that of spoliation) it may easily be conceived that there would be a large field of discussion; but upon what principle (except that of piracy) to account for the conduct of the Bermudian privateers, at this stage of the negotiation, is beyond my comprehension on any fair ground of conjecture; as it *must* swell the bill. With very great esteem and regard I am &c.

[MS.H.S.]

To ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

Philadelphia, February 16, 1795.

Dear Sir: I have duly received your favor of the 4th. Instant, accompanying the transactions of the Society for promoting Agriculture, Arts and Manufactures; and am very much obliged by your goodness in sending them to me.

Works of this sort are of the most interesting importance to every country; and it is much to be regretted that similar societies, are not more general in our own, or not more attended to in those States where they are established.

I shall, the moment I have a little more leisure than the winding up of the present Session of Congress will afford me, read your experiments on lucern with attention, and I am persuaded I shall do it also with pleasure and edification, as I have long been favorably impressed with the value of that grass; especially if it can be in this country (as in some others) cultivated in broadcast to advantage, thereby saving the expense of labour when it is raised in drills.

I take the liberty of sending for your perusal, a pamphlet on the cultivation of Potatoes from the shoots. It was sent to me by the author, and must speak for itself, as I have had no experience myself of the mode there recommended. I mean however to make trial of it the ensuing season, for which reason, after you have read the work, I pray you to return it to me; unless you, or the Society in which you preside, shall think it worthy of republication, in which case it may be retained for that purpose. With great esteem etc.⁹⁵

95. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THOMAS JOHNSON

Philadelphia, March 6, 1795.

Dear Sir: About the 20th. of last month I received a letter from you dated at George Town the 12th. of Jany. but which I presume ought to have been dated the 12th. of February.

It came to hand at the time when the Session of Congress was drawing to a close, and of course when the business of it pressed upon me. I therefore laid it aside to be acknowledged by Mr. Potts, but missing that opportunity I was about to do it

by Post, when your other favor of the 28th. Ultimo came to hand.

It is with great regret I found by both, that a difference had arisen between the Commissioners and yourself, the precise nature of which I have only a general knowledge. No opinion of mine, on the nature of it, has yet been given; nor, if it respects property, or the construction of a contract, may

there be a propriety in my doing it. Sincerely do I wish however that this dispute had not arisen; as sincerely that it could be amicably adjusted upon principles of strict justice.

To say precisely when I shall be in the Federal City, on my way to Mount Vernon (for a very short stay) is more than I am able, but it is more likely to happen between the 10th. and 15th. of April than at any other time I could name at present.

Mr. Carroll has intimated his intention of relinquishing his present Post. To fill it with a well qualified character in its various relations and duties, is of high importance to the welfare of the City. But where is this Character to be found? Doctr. Stuart has named one, who in his opinion, would answer well; but I stand committed to none, nor for none, nor shall I before I visit the City (if this shall happen in the time that is expected). If any person or persons should have come within your view, I should be grateful for their names; and the sooner I receive them the better, that I may have a little time for reflection and comparison altho' the subject may be more fully debated upon when (from what you have written) I may hope and shall expect to meet you in George Town, at

which time many other matters respecting the Federal City may be travelled over. That both of us wish it well there can be no doubt; and that justice will be rendered to your exertions to bring it to what it now is, and your future endeavours to promote its growth, and to raise its importance, I have as little hesitation in declaring. With very great esteem etc.¹³

13. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, March 24, 1795.

Gentlemen: As I may have appear'd somewhat indecisive respecting square No 21³⁰ in the federal city, I should not be surprised if you are at a loss to understand my meaning, in that particular.

The Commissioners on my application, agreed to let me have, first a quarter, then half, and finally the whole of that square. My mind settled on the last; but not being able (from the accident I met with) when I was at that place in June, to view the whole of it myself, nor to obtain such accurate information of the several parts, as respected the shape and declivity of the hill, to ascertain which was essential for my plan of improvement; I paid for no more than a moiety thereof.

I have since recollected, and indeed have been informed, that neither moiety will answer without the other for the purpose I contemplate, that is, buildings and a garden (when my means will enable me to encounter the expence).

This being the case, I repeat my wish to possess the other moiety of the said square. But if in your judgment, my delay has involved any inconvenience, or by paying for the half only, it argued a dereliction of the whole, and fresh terms must be made; you have only to name them; for as I mean to do nothing wrong in this business myself, it is not my wish, or desire, that you should do otherwise than right.

I should be glad to hear from you on this subject as soon as it is convenient; because I shall have the needful to provide for the first payment; and

30. In "Hamburg."

I would. take it with me about the middle of next month; when, if nothing unforeseen happens, I expect to be on my way to Mount Vernon, for a short stay. I am etc.³¹

***To MAJOR GENERAL DANIEL MORGAN**

(Private)

Philadelphia, March 27, 1795.

Dear Sir: The interest, which you have taken in the safety of John Mitchell, as expressed in your letter of the 19th. of January last, would be an inducement to me to go, as far in relieving him, as public propriety will admit. But the Attorney-general

31. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

having made a report of which the enclosed is a copy, I think it advisable to postpone the further consideration until his trial shall have taken place.

It has afforded me great pleasure to learn, that the general conduct and character of the Army³⁴ has been temperate and indulgent; and that your attention to the quiet and comfort of the western inhabitants has been well received by them. Still it may be proper constantly and strongly to impress

upon the Army that they are mere agents of Civil power: that out of Camp, they have no other authority, than other citizens that offences against the laws are to be examined, not by a military officer, but by a Magistrate; that they are not exempt from arrests and indictments for violations of the law; that officers ought to be careful, not to give orders, which may lead the agents into infractions of law; that no compulsion be used towards the inhabitants in the traffic, carried on between them and the army: that disputes be avoided, as much as possible, and be adjusted as quickly as may be, without urging them to an extreme: and that the whole country is not to be considered as within the limits of the camp.

I do not communicate these things to you for any other purpose, than that you may weigh them; and, without referring to any instructions from me, adopt the measures, necessary for accomplishing the foregoing objects. With great regard etc.

[N.Y.P.L.]

34. Of militia sent against the Pennsylvania insurrectionists.

To EDWARD CARRINGTON

(Private)

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1795.

Dear Sir: Although I have little reason to hope that, the offer I am going to make you will meet your approbation; yet from full conviction in my mind, that no one could, or would, discharge so important a trust with more energy and propriety than yourself; I am induced to make it. It is of the highest consequence to this Union, and to the Southern States in particular, that the public buildings in the Federal City (intended for the accomodation of Congress after the year 1800) and the other interests of that establishment should be pushed with vigor. The execution of this business is entrusted by law to three Commissioners, under the direction of the President of the United States. The present Commission is composed of Messrs. Danl. Carroll, Gustavus Scott and Doctr. Thornton. The first of whom, from age and infirmities, wishes to withdraw; to fill his place with an energetic successor is not only very interesting to the public and difficult, but is also of much solicitude with me; and, not being able to contemplate a character who possesses such peculiar qualities for this Office as you do, I am induced (notwithstanding your declining lately to accept another appointment, and you must excuse me therefor) to make you the offer of it: among other reasons, but of a

secondary nature because, if you should refuse, to accept, I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that nothing, on my part, has been omitted to obtain a fit Character.

On the score of Salary, the Office of a Commissi

oner of the Federal City, is not equal, being annually sixteen hundred Dollars only, to the one I have alluded to, but it is not an Office requiring the same confinement, and, perhaps, when compared with the expense of living in Philadelphia, and being nearer to your own estate (which in your former letter you observed required your attention) may have advantages which the other did not possess.

I came to this place last night,⁵³ to take a transient view of the situation of my private concerns in this quarter and my present intention is to leave it again, on my return to Philadelphia, on Monday next; by the Post which arrives in Alexandria on that day, it would be satisfactory to me, sooner I presume it cannot be, to hear from you on the subject of this letter, if it be convenient to give one.⁵⁴ I am etc.⁵⁵

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA⁶⁶**

Mount Vernon, April 24, 1795.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 20th, with its enclosures, came duly to hand. The dispute between the Commissioners and Mr. Johnson⁶⁷ having got into a course of legal adjudication,⁶⁸ it is unnecessary for me to express any sentiment thereon.

I regret that it could not have been settled without, because good rarely flow from disputes, evil often.

I expect to be in George town on my way to Philadelphia on Monday next, but at what hour

53. Washington left Philadelphia April 14.

54. Carrington's letter of April 24, declining the appointment, is in the *Washington Papers*.

55. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

66. Gustavus Scott and William Thornton.

67. Thomas Johnson. He was a former Commissioner.

68. Johnson's purchase of water lots north of K Street on Rock Creek had been ruled out by the Commissioners.

I am unable, at this moment, to fix. With esteem I am etc.⁶⁹

To TRISTRAM DALTON⁶³

Mount Vernon, April 24, 1795.

Dear Sir: I have been favored with your letter of the 22d. instant.⁶⁴ Previous to the receipt of which, I had written to a Gentleman of this State (at a distance from hence) to know if he would accept the trust of being a Commissioner of the Federal City. No answer has yet been received.

Part of the District of Columbia being on the Virginia side of the Potomac, and the State having contributed towards the expense of the public buildings gives it an equitable pretention to furnish a Character therefrom. On this principle I have proceeded. With esteem etc.⁶⁵

To ALEXANDER WHITE

George Town, April 28, 1795.

Dear Sir: Mr. Carroll, one of the Commissioners of the Federal City, from age, and the infirm State of his health; is desirous of quitting the employment. Permit me to ask if it would be agree

69. From *Letters of the Presidents to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

63. Former Senator from Massachusetts.

64. Now now found in the *Washington Papers*.

65. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

able to you to supply his place? The present Salary is 1600 dollars per annum. To discharge the duties properly, a residence in the City and close attention to the multifarious duties which occur in the execution of the trust is necessary.

I shall not go more into detail until you signify your determination on this head, which I pray you to do as soon as convenient after the receipt of this letter as Mr. Carroll is anxious to retire. I am etc.⁸⁰

To MARY GERMAIN HALLET

Philadelphia, May 5, 1795.

Madam: It is painful to me to receive the complaints of Mr. Hallet, through you. It is more so, as I see no propriety in my interfering in the differences between the Commissioners and him. The Commissioners are responsible to the public for conducting the public buildings, and other concerns of the Federal City. In the discharge of this trust, they must pursue such means as in their judgment, are most conducive to the end.

Why Mr. Hallet left the business in which he was employed by them; or why he was discontinued; is better known, perhaps, to you, than it is to me.

What assurances were given to Mr. Hallet to induce him to leave the business he was engaged in, at Philadelphia. What that business was; What money he has received for his services; and what further sum he is entitled to; are matters entirely unknown to me. All I can do therefore is, to transmit the representation you have made of his case, to the Commissioners,

80. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

who are knowing of the facts; and can have no interest in withholding justice, where it is due. It is my sincere wish and desire, that it should be administered by them, to everyone; and I have confidence that, having the power, inclination will not be wanting to do so.

Having met your letter on the road, and without knowing by whose hand it was delivered, I did not examine the contents until I had reached my evening's Stage; nor have I had leizure or opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of it until now. I wish you and Mr. Hallet both, well, and am etc.

P.S. Your letter without date, but evidently written after those, the receipt of which I have already acknowledged, came to my hands since my arrival at this place; and is transmitted with the others to the Commissioners.⁸³

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, May 5, 1795.

Gentlemen: The papers herewith enclosed (except one) were put into my hands whilst I was on horseback, passing through the city on my journey. I did not then read them, or know from whom they came.

Enclosed is my answer; which, after reading, be so good as to Seal and cause it to be delivered. As it discloses my sentiments respecting the

83. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

representation of Mr. Hallet, through his Wife, I shall not repeat them; further than to assure you of my confidence that you will do strict justice to his memorial and claims as far as they merit. With esteem, etc.⁸⁴

To DANIEL CARROLL

Philadelphia, May 17, 1795.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 10th. instant, was received by yesterday's Post.

In answer to the enquiry therein, the following, as nearly as I can recollect, is the result of all that passed between Messrs. Scott and Thornton and myself, respecting their dispute with Mr. Johnson.

After the conversation which I had with the latter (in the presence of yourself and Doctr. Stuart the day I proceeded to Mount Vernon) and hearing his Statement, and the written elucidation of the principles on which he meant to establish his claim; I expressed to Doctr. Thornton, whom I saw soon after, my regret that so unfortunate a dispute should have happened, and a wish that it might be amicably settled. He, any more than Mr. Johnson, seemed to think this could not be

accomplished, as the Commisisoners (or whether he confined it more particularly to Mr. Scott and himself, I am not certain) were clearly of opinion, and had been so advised by professional men, that the lots upon Rock Creek would, undoubtedly, be considered as Water lots under

84. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Greenleaf's contract; and being so considered and of greater value, it followed as a consequence, that they, as trustees of public property, in the City, could not yield to a claim which would establish a principle injurious to that property. He added that they had taken pains to investigate this right, and was possessed of a statement thereof which he or they (I am not sure which) wished me to look at.

Having heard Mr. Johnson's statement and reasoning upon the case, I did not decline the perusal of this; but it was observed by the Doctor,⁹¹ that there were some papers not quite ready, but which should be sent so soon as they could be prepared. Accordingly, after I had been at Mount Vernon two or three days, I received a Packet from Messrs. Scott and Thornton containing Greenleaf's contract (or a copy of it) the interrogatories, and answers to which your letter alludes; and some other papers, the purport of which I do not recollect; as, from the letters which were pouring in upon me whilst I was at home, I could only afford them a hasty reading; and all have been returned, with a repetition of my regret that such a dispute should have arisen; and a declaration, that as it had got into a course of legal adjudication it might be as improper as it was unnecessary, for me to express any opinion upon the merits of the case.

Thus, I have not only given an answer to the simple question propounded respecting the

91. Dr. William Thornton.

Interrogatories of the Clerk, but I have related, to the best of my recollection, *all* that passed between the other two Commissioners and myself, when you were not present, relative to this dispute. With esteem etc.

P.S. The evening of the day I parted with you I wrote to Mr. Alexr. White made him an offer of the place you have requested to resign; which he has accepted. I hope it will not be inconvenient to you under this information, to continue to discharge the duties of Commissioner until his arrival at the Federal City.⁹²

To WILLIAM DEAKINS, JUNIOR

Philadelphia, May 17, 1795.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 5th. instant⁹³ has been duly received. That the duties of a Commissioner of the Federal City would have been discharged with ability and fidelity by the Gentleman whose name you have mentioned to me, I cannot harbour a doubt; but the An—I Gab—I, in this situation would have been charged with partiality. From a thorough conviction of this, I have never turned my attention to a character who, at the time of his appointment; was a resident either in George Town, or the Federal City.

The evening of the day I parted with you last, wrote to a gentleman of Virginia⁹⁴ (from whence as part of the district of Columbia lyes in it and the State has contributed to the expence of the public buildings, I was inclined to look for the successor of Mr. Carroll) and have received his letter of acceptance of the Office

92. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

93. Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

94. Alexander White. (See Washington's letter to Alexander White, Apr. 28, 1795, *ante*.)

of Commissioner.⁹⁵ With esteem etc.⁹⁶

To ALEXANDER WHITE

(Private)

Philadelphia, June 15, 1795.

Dear Sir: After an unqualified acceptance of the Office of Commissioner of the Federal City, and a lapse of time at an important season for business, it would be uncandid not to say that I feel pain at your hesitating now, to enter upon the duties of that Office.

I had not heard before the receipt of your letter, that you had resumed the practice of the law; nor did I suppose that you could, with your family, transplant yourself in a moment to the Federal city; although I wished it might happen at as early a period as you could make it convenient, foreseeing advantages which would result from the measure.

The proposition was not made to you under an idea that you were skilled in the principles of Architecture, or because I supposed you had any particular knowledge of work, or the quantum to be exacted from workmen. The first is varying continually, according to the demand for, or the exorbitance of, the people: and care only is necessary when the latter is executed by contract, or the piece, to prevent, as much as the nature of the case will admit, imposition; and when day wages are given (which in all practicable cases ought to be avoided) to have an eye that the overlookers of them are diligent.

95. His letter of acceptance is not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

96. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On May 17 Washington wrote to William Augustine Washington, inclosing that which "may serve to remove some doubts." A photostat copy of this is in the *Washington Papers*, through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City. Across the address sheet of the original William Augustine Washington has written "enclosing Cabots letter."

For these, I have no doubt your judgment, inclination and industry are quite adequate. In all other respects, I am equally persuaded, you are well qualified to discharge the duties of Commissioner; and it would give me, and I think I may add the public also, entire satisfaction if you could make it convenient and agreeable to yourself, to devolve your time and attention to this business.

Unless this is done, I should not feel myself justified in the change of compensation to the Commissioners, from six dollars a day while they were in Session to sixteen hundred dollars per annum. That change being the result of conviction, that as the city progressed, nothing short of constant attendance (allowing for those occasional absences which every person in file discharge of public trust require, at times) would enable the Commissioners, to answer the end of their appointment. Therefore the above sum, which was conceived adequate to this service, was resolved to be given. With esteem etc.¹⁰

10. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

(Private)

Philadelphia, March 14, 1794.

Gentlemen: My object in giving you a sight of the enclosed letters from Mr. Ellicott, is merely to let you see the temper, and tendency of his views; and what may be expected from his representations to others. After reading the letters, be so good as to return them to me.

In September last, after having purchased four lots in Carrollsburgh (the doing of which was more the result of incident than premeditation); and being unwilling from that circumstance, it should be believed that I had a greater predilection to the southern, than I had to the Northern part of the city, I proposed next day (the sale being continued) to buy a like number of lots in Hamburg, and accordingly designated the spot; but as little notice was taken of it then, and none since, that I have heard; and as the sale to Greenleaf and others may have thrown impediments in the way, I should be glad to know what my prospect is; adding, that I am as ready to relinquish, as I was to imbibe the idea, of this purchase.

I had no desire at that time,

nor have I any now, to stand on a different footing from every other purchaser. It was, and certainly would be convenient for me to know if there is a probability of my being accomodated agreeably to the enclosed from Mr. Blodget; first, because the means of payment are to be provided, and secondly, because my object in fixing on the spot there mentioned is to build thereon when I can make it convenient; provided the area described by him can be obtained: for less would not subserve my purpose.

Whenever deeds to others issue, be so good as to direct those for the lots which I have bought on the Eastern branch, to be forwarded to me. With great esteem and regard I am etc.¹⁶

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, April 11, 1794.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 23d Ult. came duly to hand, but as you did not expect to meet again until the 12th. instt. I have, accordingly, postponed my reply to the contents of it 'till now.

I am sensible that the No East

16. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

Under date of Mar. 14, 1794, in the *Journal of the Proceedings of the President*, is the following entry: "Signed Letters patent of this date, granted to Eli Whitney, of Massachusetts, for an improvement in the mode of ginning Cotton."

quartr. of square Number 21,⁴⁹ is subject to the disadvantage of a North and East front (not desirable I confess) but these are more than counterpoised in my estimation by the formation of the ground, which, though expensive to improve, on account of a steep declivity on the other two sides, can never (if a quarter of the square is taken, and improved) have the view from it obscured by buildings on the adjoining lots. I was on the ground, and examined it in company with Mr. Blodget during the Sale in September last; and after comparing the advantages and disadvantages, resolved to fix on that spot if a quarter of the square could be obtained, and the price not run upon me, beyond the usual Sales; for doing which there could be no just cause; for, as I have observed before, it is not less than the area mentioned that would secure my object; and to improve it would be expensive, from the shape of the ground. If, after this explanation, I can be accomodated without involving inconveniences, I would rather the matter should be fixed *now* than delayed to a *future* period, first, because I had rather be upon a certainty (one way or other) than remain in doubt; and 2dly. because it would be convenient to me to know, whether there

49. In Hamburg.

would be a call (for some money which I expect to receive in a few days) for that purpose, or that I might apply it to some other.

I was not unmindful of your communication respecting Major Rivardy;⁵⁰ but, unluckily, the Secretary of State mistook (as I have lately discovered) the purport of my direction to him on this head. It was, that your employing the Major for the purposes designated, wd. be perfectly agreeable to me if you were satisfied with his character, and that he had abilities adequate to the undertaking; that he was an entire stranger to me; and that I had rather you should pursue your own judgment in, than be prompted to, a choice by me. He understood these sentiments as applying to the measure (of the utility and indd. necessity of which I had no doubt) and not to the man. Hence the mistake has happened, nor should I have discovered it, had not our late enquiry for Engineers brought to view that nothing had been concluded between you and Majr. Rivardy. The employment as Engineer may occupy him three or four months. The fortifications at Baltimore, Alexandria and Norfolk were

assigned to him that you might be enabled to judge whether under these circumstances it would be best to adhere to the Major, or employ Mr. Vermanet, or any other.

50. Maj. John Jacob Ulrick Rivardy, of the United States Engineers.

Your more perfect knowledge of the business, and of the situation of things than I possess, will direct you better than any advice I could give; for in truth I have little knowledge of characters proper for such Surveying, levelling &ca. as the City requires; and besides, I have been unfortunate hitherto in those whom I have been instrumental in bringing forward for the subordinate Offices in the City.

Mr. Greenleaf is here, and told me on tuesday last that he should set out for George town as [sic] yesterday or today, but if he does not call upon me before eleven oclock (Post hour) this letter will go by the Mail. With very great esteem etc.⁵¹

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, April 27, 1794.

Gentlemen: The Post of yesterday brought me your favor of the 23d. instant.

I am obliged to you for the early attention which you have

51. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

given to the request contained in my letter of the 11th. preceeding and I am perfectly well satisfied with the price which you have affixed on the lot, I have obtained.

If it be necessary for me to decide at this moment, whether I will avail myself of the offer you have made me of the No. West quarter of the same square, I shall answer in the affirmative; but it would be more agreeable to me (if no inconvenience would result from delay) to suspend my determination until I could examine, and form my plan on the spot; for as it is for the purpose of improvement I fix on that site, whensoever my finances will enable me, I should like to see in what manner this can be done most advantageously. Had the So. East, instead of the No. West quarter of this square fallen to the public, I should have embraced your offer with avidity; not that I think it of more intrinsic value than the other (if I recollect the ground rightly) but because the hill declining

that way also, it would have laid me entirely open to the South, and have given a fine exposure for a Garden.

As soon after the rising of Congress as the business of the public will allow, I intend a visit to Mount Vernon for a few days; and if I knew the time appointed for your next meeting at George Town, a few days delay on my part, in order to

meet you there, would be attended with no inconvenience to me.

Your letter to Messrs. Harrison and Tayler was sent to them as soon as I had read it. I sincerely wish you were rid of that business to your intire satisfaction. I fear, however, you will have some trouble in it before this happens.

I shall not, at this time, enter upon the subject of the letter written to me by Mr. Johnson and Doctr. Stuart, further than to express my wish that they would remain in Office until August, if it can be made to comport with their convenience. The reasons for this shall be assigned when we meet, or in another letter, if this is not likely to happen soon. With very great esteem etc.⁷⁷

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, June 1, 1794.

Gentlemen: I had hopes, and at one time strong expectation, that Congress would

77. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

have closed their Session before this; and that other matters would have permitted my proposed visit to Mount Vernon about the time of your meeting in the Federal City; which (by a letter from Mr. Carroll), I understood was appointed to be on the 5th. of this month.

In this expectation I have been disappointed. Congress are still in Session and it is not clear to me that they will rise this week. After which business of a public nature may, and probably will detain me in this City some days. This being the case, I decide now, to take the No. West quarter of square 21 (offered to me in your letter of the 23d. of April); and presuming it was meant I should pay the same for this, as for the No. Et. quarter I enclose 266¹/₂ dollars; being the amount of the first payment for both.

For the reasons mentioned to you in my letter of the 27th. of April, I should have been better pleased if I could have got the So. East in place of the No. West quarter of this square; and if you could, conveniently, and with propriety (for I do not know to whom it belongs, or under what circumstances it is), make the exchange, or obtain it by purchase (at or about the price of the others, it would oblige me. If by purchase, I mean notwithstanding, to retain the No. West quarter also. In short, it being my purpose to build on this sqr. if by some arrangements which I have in contemplation, I can

obtain the means, I should have no objection, but on the contrary would wish, to possess myself of the *whole* square, that I might have space enough for my plan, be the design of it what it may.

Not being without hope that I may yet see you before August, I shall not in this letter, more than in my former of the 27th. of April, touch the subject which was then postponed. With esteem etc.²⁰

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, July 23, 1794.

Gentlemen: I have subscribed to the alteration in the seventh article of the "Terms and conditions declared on the 17th. day of October 1791 for regulating the materials and manner of the buildings and improvements on the lots in the City of Washington" and now enclose it to you. I wish, however, you had declared that so much of the stone walls, on which the railing in the Street is to be placed, as shall

20. From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

appear above the pavement (or surface of the ground before it is paved) should be of free-stone hewed. The presumption I grant is, that no person who would go to the expence of an Iron-railing, on a Wall, would fix it on rough stone; still, the altered article does not prohibit the measure; and as it is better to prevent disputes than to encounter them, the insertion of a word or two may obviate a plea that a *good* wall may be composed of foundation stone equally with any other stone.

As your sepearte certificate of my purchase of lot No 4, is comprehended in the last which you sent me, with No. 1. I return it, as useless to me, and proper for you to repossess.

With great esteem etc.⁶⁸

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, January 28, 1795.

Gentlemen: A plan for the establishment of an University in the federal City, has frequently been the subject of conversation; but in what manner it is proposed to commence this important institution; on how extensive a scale, the means by

68. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

An interesting document is in the *Washington Papers* under date of July 25, 1794. It is a description of the "Uniform for the Navy of the United States of America," which includes also that of the Marine Corps. Thus was forwarded to the President by Secretary Knox, the War Department of this date being charged with the administration of the Navy.

which it is to be effected; how it is to be supported; or what progress is made in it; are matters altogether unknown to me.

It has always been a source of serious reflection and sincere regret with me, that the youth of the United States should be sent to foreign countries for the purpose of education. Altho' there are doubtless many under these circumstances who escape the danger of contracting principles, unfriendly to republican government; yet we ought to deprecate the hazard attending ardent and susceptible minds, from being too strongly, and too early prepossessed in favor of other political systems, before they are capable of appreciating their own.

For this reason, I have greatly wished to see a plan adopted by which the arts, Sciences and Belles lettres, could be taught in their *fullest* extent; thereby embracing *all* the advantages of European tuition with the means of acquiring the liberal knowledge which is necessary to qualify our citizens for the exigencies of public, as well as private life; and (which with me, is a consideration of great magnitude) by assembling the youth from the different parts of this rising republic, contributing from their intercourse,

and interchange of information, to the removal of prejudices which might perhaps, sometimes arise, from local circumstances.

The federal City, from its centrality, and the advantages which, in other respects it must have over any other place in the U: States, ought to be preferred, as a proper site for such a University. And if a plan can be adopted upon a scale as *extensive* as I have described; and the execution of it shall commence under favorable auspices, in a reasonable time, with a fair prospect of success; I will grant, in perpetuity, fifty shares in the navigation of Potomac River towards the endowment of it.

What annuity will arise from these fifty shares, when the navigation is in full operation, can, at this time, be only conjectured; and those who are acquainted with the nature of it, can form as good a judgment as myself.

As the design of this University has assumed no form with which I am acquainted; and as I am equally ignorant who the persons are that have taken, or are disposed to take, the maturation of the plan upon themselves, I have been at a loss to whom I should make this communication of my intentions. If the Commrs. of the federal city have any particular agency in bringing the matter forward, then the information

I now give to them, is in its proper course, If, on the other hand, they have no more to do in it than others, who may be desirous of seeing so important a measure carried into effect, they will be so good as to excuse my using them as the medium for disclosing these intentions; for as much, as it appears necessary, that the funds for the establishment and support of the Institution, should be known to the promoters of it; and because I saw no mode more eligible of making known mine. For these reasons I give you the trouble of this Address, and the assurance of being Gentlemen, &c.⁸⁶

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, July 29, 1795.

Gentlemen: The memorial dated the 24th inst. subscribed by Messrs. Scott and White, with other papers relating to water lots and for regulating the building of wharves in the federal City, came duly to hand, as did Dr. Thornton's letter of the same date, informing me that he differed

86. The draft is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

On January 30 Washington, in answer to Hamilton's note of that day, wrote: "The eventual power which you applied for is herewith sent. Let the day of your resignation be made perfectly convenient to yourself. There is no necessity that your successor should be named on Monday next." This

note is entered in the "Letter Book." Hamilton had written that he would be obliged to hold back his resignation as Secretary of the Treasury until Monday, in order to sign some papers then in course of preparation. "But it will reach the President in time to admit of a nomination on *that day* of a successor, if the President thinks fit." Hamilton's letter is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On this same day (January 30) the power which the Secretary of the Treasury had applied for was sent him. The power mentioned is dated January 30 and is also entered in the "Letter Book." It reads: "Presuming the legality of the propositions contained in your Letters of the 24. and 25. Instant, I consent that you give an eventual instruction to our Minister at the Hague to postpone the instalment of a Million of Florins, to become due on the first of June next on account of the Dutch Debt; and I also consent, that you cause to be allowed for charges upon the last Loan of 3,000,000 of florins obtained at Amsterdam, four and an half per Cent."

in some respects from his colleagues on these topics; but that he had not time, by that post, to assign his reasons for doing so. By the post on Monday I received them; since which I have given the whole subject the best consideration the pressure of other dispatches would enable me to do. The result is, to leave the matter where the Maryland Act has placed it, to the decision of the Commissioners.

I perceive no material difference in *your* opinions; nor are any of them wide of mine; which, to avoid detail, may be summed up in a few words, to let the holders of the grounds adjacent to the wall do as they please with the water opposite to them, under the following restrictions. 1st. that they shall not injure the navigation by the ex[ten]tion of their wharves; 2dly that they shall not interrupt by any buildings thereon, *any* of the streets, north and south, or East and west, if it be practicable to avoid it. 3dly that they shall be subject to general, or at least proper regulations. In complying with the first no difficulty will occur; and if the second can be accomplished, without involving inconveniences, and an expense of which I have not an accurate knowledge; neither the health nor the beauty of the City would be affected, if the wharves and the buildings thereon were to extend to the channels of both waters; which, in time, I have no doubt will

be the case, for on commerce, more than to any other cause, the city must depend for its growth and importance. Whatever may be the determination of the board on these points, the sooner they are announced to the public the better; as an idea has gone forth not favorable or pleasing to the seekers of water lots.

I have no desire myself to alter the appropriation of any of the public squares; I only wished that the propriety of their designation might be well considered before they were ultimately fixed. And for

the reasons which have been assigned, strengthened by the Report of Mr. Dermot, I approve of the site for the Mint. The Square is, I conceive, sufficiently large, and the water is essential.

In a letter received from the Secy. of State, in answer to one I wrote him from hence respecting the funds of the City, and a representation to be made thereon to Messrs. Morris and Nicholson, he replies thus in a letter dated the 25th. instant,

Morris and Nicholson inform me that a part of their arrearages will be immediately paid up; and that they have made a provision for furnishing the balance in a short time.

I am etc.⁷⁸

78. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, July 29, 1795.

Gentlemen: On friday last I received your several dispatches with different signatures; and should have answered them by Monday's post; but Doctr. Thornton promising to assign his reasons for the dissent he had given to the proposed regulations respecting wharves and water lots, I postponed giving any opinion thereon until I should receive these, which I did yesterday morning. Since which I have been so extremely hurried with one dispatch and another, that I have not been able to attend to the business of the federal city.

I propose to be in Alexandria on Monday, and shall proceed to George town in the afternoon, when, or very early next morning, I will meet you and decide upon all the matters referred to. Gentlemen
Yr. etc.⁷⁶

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Mount Vernon, July 29, 1795.

Gentlemen: I was duly favored with

76. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

your letter of the 24th. instant, with its enclosures. As you have called upon Mr. Greenleaf to come forward and substantiate the charges he has exhibited agt. you, in his letter to the Secretary of State (copy of which you sent me) I shall wait the issue, and do no more, at this time, than to acknowledge of your dispatch. With esteem etc.⁷⁷

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, September 18, 1795.

Gentlemen: The copy of the Letter which you wrote to the Secretary of State on the 21st ulto., enclosing regulations relative to the wharves and buildings in the federal City, came to my hands yesterday.

If the proprietors of water-lots will be satisfied with the rules therein established for the extension of wharves and buildings thereon, the regulations will meet my entire approbation; and of their ideas on this head, you have, no doubt, made some enquiries, and decide accordingly.

The other regulations, respecting the removal of dirt &c. and the

77. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

thickness of walls, appear to me to be very proper; but in settling the latter point, the opinion of workmen, I presume, has been taken. With respect I am etc.⁵⁷

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Alexandria, September 26, 1795.

Gentlemen: At this place, yesterday afternoon, I received the letter herewith enclosed from Mr. Morris, in answer to one I wrote him; as much of a private as an official nature.⁶¹ It is for your information only I send it, to avoid a lengthy detail of its contents: to give which I have not time at present. When you have read it, be so good as to return it to Gentlemen Your etc.⁶²

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Mount Vernon, October 7, 1795.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 5th. instt. enclosing a Memorial of the same date, came to my hands yesterday.

57. In the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

61. Morris's letter of September 21 is in the *Washington Papers*.

62. From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N.J.

The latter shall have the best consideration I can give it, between this and Monday next; when, if nothing, unforeseen at present, intervenes to prevent, I shall be in George Town on my return to Philadelphia; and will converse fully with you on the subject matter of it. With esteem etc.

[H.S.P.]

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

(Private)

Philadelphia, November 4, 1795.

Gentlemen: In a letter hastily written to you on the 30th. ulto., I approved the plan of applying to the Legislature of Maryland for a loan of money, agreeably to the suggestion of Genl. Forest, for the purposes of the Federal city: Provided "upon more mature consideration and enquiry, you should concur with him in opinion that it certainly could be obtained." I am in the same sentiment still; but let me entreat you not to be *led into the attempt* upon slight grounds.

An essay and failure, may be attended with very serious consequences in the other plan, which has been approved; and would weaken, if not altogether destroy, some of your most powerful arguments with

Congress. And the prospect of a foreign loan has, as you have been informed by Mr. Wells, proved abortive.

One of your board is much better acquainted with the views of different parts of Maryland, relative to the navigations of the Potomac and Susquehanna than I am; but depend, if ever the subject is discussed in the Legislature thereof, it will be found that wherever the preponderancy of interest lyes, there will be found a majority of votes also. And rely moreover, altho' present appearances may not sufficiently indicate the fact, that the weight of Baltimore will be found against you, and ought to be calculated upon. The intelligent people of that place, however tranquil from the present flourishing state of the Town and Trade, cannot view the progress of the Federal City, and the inland navigation of the Potomack without perceiving the ultimate effect, and wishing to divert the means which would contribute thereto, to another object more interesting to them: I mean, opening the Susquehanna; which is now reviving and getting into activity again; and is, I presume, equally in want of pecuniary aids.

These ideas, upon reflection, have such weight with me, that I could not resist expressing them with more force, and more in detail, than they were conveyed in my former letter. You ought not, in my opinion to proceed on de

lusive hopes, or on ambiguous encouragements, for the reasons already mentioned; and others might be assigned: But, rather than hazard *a motion*, uncertain in the result, before the ground is safely explored (in both houses) forbear to make it, relying, in preference, on the former plan.

From Mr. Scotts acquaintance with the individual members of the Legislature, he might (if his visit to Annapolis could be covered by any good pretext) contribute much to a previous knowledge of what would be the probable issue of the attempt at this loan; and advance therein, or retreat, accordingly.

With esteem etc.²⁷

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, October 30, 1795.

Gentlemen: Your Letter of the 26 Instant covering one from Genl. U. Forrest of the 24th. came to me by the last post, and as the subject thereof is important, and there is no time to lose, I delay not in giving you my opinion.

27. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

From Genl. Forrest's communication, there appears to be every probability that a Loan from the State of Maryland may be effected for the purposes of the Federal City, to the extent you wish. If therefore, upon more mature consideration and enquiry, you concur in opinion that it can be done, I think you ought not to hesitate to make the attempt. I would have you, however, to be fully assured (as far as is possible) of success, before the attempt is finally determined upon; as a failure might be attended with disadvantage to the interests of the City. If the attempt should terminate unfavorably, it will then be time enough, if it should be thought expedient, to make application to the Genl. Government.

The papers which were transmitted to you on Wednesday last by Mr. Dandridge, by my direction, will shew you that your attempt for a Loan in London has issued without success. I am etc.²²

22. In the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the District Commissioners* in the Library of Congress.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, November 9, 1795.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 31st ulto. by Mr. Hadfield,²⁸ has been received. I have since seen Mr. Hoban, and have had a good deal of conversation with both of them, in the presence of each other with the plans before us.

From the explanations of the former, it would seem as if he had not been perfectly understood. or in other words tht. *now* he means no change in the interior of the building, of the least importance; nor any elsewhere, that will occasion delay, or add to the expence; but the contrary; whilst the exterior will in his opinion, assume a better appearance, and the Portico be found more convenient than on the present plan. As far as I understand the matter the difference, lyes simply in discarding the Basement, and adding an Attick story, if the latter shall be found necessary; but this (the attick) he thinks may be dispensed with, as sufficient elevation may be obtained in the manner he has explained it, without; and to add a dome over the open, or circular area or lobby, which in my judgment is a most desirable thing, and what I always expected was part of the original design until

otherwise informed in my late visits to the City, if strength can be given to it and sufficient light be obtained.

28. George Hadfield, an English architect. He had succeeded James Hoban as superintendent of the Capitol building.

However proper it may have been in you, to refer the decision of the objections of Mr. Hadfield to the Executive I shall give no final opinion thereon.

I. Because I have not sufficient knowledge of the subject, to judge with precision. 2 because the means of acquiring it are not within my reach; 3d. if they were, pressed as I am with other matters particularly at the eve of an approaching, perhaps an interesting Session of Congress I could not avail myself of them; but above all because I have not the precise knowledge of the characters you have to deal with; the knowledge of all the facts which are before you, nor perhaps the same view you can take of the consequences of a decision for, or against Mr. Hadfields proposed alteration; or of his abilities to carry them into execution, if adopted.

I have told him in decisive terms however, that if the plan on which you have been proceeding, is not capitolly defective, I cannot (after such changes, delays, and expences as have been encountered already) consent to a departure from it, if either of these consequences is to be involved: but that if he can satisfy you of the contrary I should have no objection as he conceives his character as an Architect is in some measure at Stake, and inasmuch as the present plan is no bodies, but a compound of every bodies, provided these things as I have just observed can be ascertained to your entire satisfaction. I added further as a matter of material moment, the short term for which he was engaged and what might be the consequence of his quitting the building at the end thereof, or compelling fresh, perhaps exorbitant terms if a new agreement was to be made. to this he replied, he would not only promise, but bind²⁹ himself to stick by the building until it was finished.

29. In the letter sent, which is in the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge, in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia*, in the Library of Congress, the two words "promise" and "bind" are underscored.

On the spot, at the seat of information, with a view of the materials on hand, the facility of obtaining others; with a better knowledge of the only characters on whom you can rely for carrying on the building, than I possess; with other details unknown to me, you can decide with more safety than I am enabled to do, on the measures proper to be pursued under the embarrassments wch. has arisen from this diversity of opinion: That decision be it what it may will be agreement to Gentlemen.

***To CHARLOTTE DE LA SAUSSAYE HAZEN**

Philadelphia, August 31, 1795.

Madam: More from a disposition to evince to you that I was not inattentive to your request, than from an apprehension that the Secretary of the Treasury required any stimulus to do you all the justice, and favor, which the rules of his office would permit; I sent the letter which you were pleased to honor me with, to him.

Enclosed is the result; and it may not be amiss for you to know, that I have no power, nor would there be any propriety, in my interfering with the settlement of accounts; unless it be in cases of malpractice in the Officer. I wish that both your own, and Genl. Hazens situation were more comfortable than you represent them. It depends, it would seem, upon himself to make it so, in part. I am etc.

***To EDWARD CARRINGTON**

(Private)

Mount Vernon, September 28, 1795.

Dear Sir: Wishing to fill the Office of Attorney-General of the U States with a gentleman of acknowledged abilities, and of the best disposition to promote the welfare of this country, permit me to ask you (confidentially) if Colo. Innes⁶⁷ would, in all respect, do for such an appointment?

That he possesses great natural endowments I have always been told; and that he is a friend to the general government I have no cause to disbelieve. But what his acquired knowledge is, how well grounded he may be in law generally and particularly in the Law of Nations; and what is his depth in the science of Politicks, or in other words, his acquaintance with history and his *general* knowledge, I am altogether ignorant.

If, and I permit you to consult Mr. Marshall⁶⁸ on this occasion, you should think he would do honor to the appointment allow me to request the favor of you to sound him on the score of his acceptance, and, whether it is agreeable to him to do so or not, to give me the earliest intimation of the result; for the successor of Mr. Bradford, whomsoever he shall be, must enter upon the duties of the function with as little delay as possibly can be avoided.

Colo. Innes has, I know, the character of extreme indolence. and In all employments, this will be considered as a drawback from the fitness of character or the execution of a trust; but the Office of Attorney general of the U. States does not require constant labour, or attention. At times, both must be close and deep. On such occasions his pride (if his abilities are adequate) would stimulate him to exertion and eclat.

67. James Innes.

68. John Marshall.

Your sentiments on the subject of this enquiry will remain with Dear Sir Your etc.

***To EDWARD CARRINGTON**

(Private and confidential)

Mount Vernon, October 9, 1795

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 2d. instant came duly to hand, and I shall wait the result of the proposed enquiry, respecting Colo. Innes, which I wish might be soon.

The compliance with one request oftentimes begets another, and that is the case at present. You know, full well, that the office of State is vacant; but you may not know that I find difficulty in filling it. In the appointments to the great offices of the government, my aim has been to combine geographical situations, and sometimes other considerations, with abilities; and fitness of *known* characters. In pursuance of this system, I have tried to bring Judge Patterson⁸² Mr. Johnson (of Maryland) and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of So. Carolina into this office. All have declined; the latter by the Post of Wednesday. I would have made an offer of it to Mr. Henry in the first instance, but two reasons were opposed to it; 1st. ignorance of his political sentiments (for I should consider it as an act of governmental Suicide, to bring a man into so high an office who was unfriendly to the Constitution and laws which are to be his guide) and 2d., because

82. William Paterson (Patterson).

I had no idea he would accept the office; until General (late Govt.) Lee, gave some reasons which have induced me (in a degree) to draw a different conclusion; assuring me at the sametime that he

believed Mr. Henry's Sentiments relative to the Constitution were changed; and that his opinion of the government was friendly.

Of these matters however (so important in their nature) I wish to learn the opinion of others; and of whom can I enquire more likely to know, than yourself?

Let me then come to the point: If in the judgment of yourself and Genl. Marshall Colo. Innes is a fit character for Attorney Genl. of the U. States; Will accept the Office; and enter upon the duties of it without delay; no application is to be made to Mr. Henry, be his sentiments what they may. If on the contrary, that event does not take place; I impose upon you the task, and pray you to have the goodness to forward the enclosed letter to him by Express (the cost of which I will pay) provided you accord in Sentiment with Genl. Lee with respect to the political opinions of that Gentleman; and have reason to believe he has expressed no opinion adverse to the treaty with Great Britain, and is disposed to give active opposition to the adoption of, for that would place both him and me in embarrassed situations.

From the instances which have fallen within your own knowledge, you can form some idea of the difficulties I experience in finding out, and prevailing on characters to fill offices of importance. In the case before us, I am sensible I am imposing a delicate task upon you, but from the peculiar circumstances thereof, it is, in some measure, a necessary one; and having a high opinion of General Marshalls honor, prudence and judgment, I consent to your consulting him on this occasion, as you did in the case of Colo. Innes.

I have, I must confess, but little expectation that Mr. Henry will accept the offer, if it gets to him; and therefore I must look forward to the consequence of his refusal; let me ask therefore if another trial should be made, and a refusal ensue; and ultimately, it should be found eligible to remove the present Secretary of War to the Office of State (if it should be agreeable to himself) would you fill his place as Secretary of War?

You will, My dear Sir, perceive that the *whole* of this letter is perfectly confidential, written perhaps with more frankness than prudence, but I rely on your goodness and discretion to appreciate my motives. My letter to Mr. Henry is left open for your perusal, that the whole matter may be before you. If it should go forward Seal it, if not return it to, Dear Sir Your friend etc.⁸³

P.S. On Monday I leave this for Phila.⁸⁴

***To EDMUND RANDOLPH**

Philadelphia, October 25, 1795.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th⁶ has been received. It is full of innuendoes, I shall therefore once more, and for the last time, repeat in the most unequivocal terms, that you are at full liberty to publish any thing that

83. Carrington replied (October 13: "We are not without apprehensions, that Genl Lee estimates too highly the affections of Mr. H—towards the Constitution, General Marshall being, however, decidedly of opinion, in which I cordially joined, that your letter should be forwarded to him, I have this morning dispatched it by Express...we have changed the order in which you directed the propositions to Colo. Innes and Mr Henry to stand: the fact is, we have as yet had no opportunity of acting with respect to the first Gentleman, nor do we know when we shall; this was likely to suspend operations longer than the nature and importance of the object admitted." Carrington's letter is in the *Washington Papers*).

84. From a photostat of the original in the *Washington Papers*.

6. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

ever passed between us, written or oral that you think will subserve your purposes. A conscious rectitude, and an invariable endeavour to promote the honor, welfare, and happiness of this country; by every means in the power of the Executive, and within the compass of my abilities, leaves no apprehension on my mind from any disclosure, whatsoever.⁷

To whom, or for what purpose you mean to apply the following words of your letter "I have been the meditated victim of party-spirit" will be found I presume, in your defence without which I shall never understand them. I cannot conceive they are aimed at me, because an hundred and an hundred times you have heard me lament from the bottom of my Soul that differences of sentiments should have occasioned those heats which are disquieting a country, otherwise the happiest in the world, and you have heard me express the most ardent wish that some expedient could be devised to heal them. The disclosure to me, by an Officer of government, of Mr. Fauchets intercepted letter after the contents were communicated to him, was an act of such evident propriety, that no man of candour,

entertaining a proper sense of duty, can possibly condemn: I do not see then how this will apply to this case, more than the first.

You have, Sir, entirely mistaken the principle upon which (in contravention of the opinion of the gentleman, who is discharging the duties of Secretary of State) I gave you the Inspection of what you declared to be the *only* paper you were in want of, to complete your defence. My *sole* motive in furnishing it, was, that it might not be imputed that any thing which *you* conceived necessary to your vindication, was withheld: for however differently the matter may appear in the sequel, I am free to declare that I

7. At this point in the draft the following is crossed out: "public or private that is founded in truth."

cannot, at this moment, see what relation there is between the Treaty with G. Britain, and the details and suggestions which are contained in the intercepted letter of Mr. Fauchet. And I am still more at a loss to understand the meaning of these other words in your letter "But I shall disclose even what I am compelled to disclose under the operation of the necessity which you yourself have created" Can these expressions allude to my having put Mr. Fauchet's letter into your hands in presence of the heads of departmts for explanation of the passages which related to your conversations with him? Or to the acceptance of your resignation, voluntarily and unexpectedly offered? Or to the assurance given in my letter of the of Augt.⁸ in answer to yours of the ⁹ (and most religiously observed on my part) not to mention any thing of the matter until you had had an opportunity of clearing it up, whilst you on the other hand were making free communications thereof in all quarters, and intimating to your friends that in the course of your vindication you should bring things to view which would affect me more than any which had yet appeared? if neither of these, nor an expectation that I shd. have passed the matter over unnoticed, or in a private explanation only between ourselves, I know nothing to which the sentiment can have the least reference. But I do not write from a desire to obtain explanations; for it is not my meaning nor shall I proceed any farther in discussions of this sort, unless necessity should call for a simple, and candid statement of the business, to be laid before the public.¹⁰

8. Aug. 20, 1795, *q. v.*

9. Aug. 19, 1795, by which Randolph resigned as Secretary of State.

10. This draft is indorsed by Washington: "This is the rough Draught of a Letter to Edmd. Randolph Esq. But upon re-consideran was not sent to him."

***To EDWARD CARRINGTON**

Philadelphia, November 1, 1795.

Dear Sir: Your favors of the 8th. 13th. and 20th. Ult. have been duly received; the latter, enclosing one from Mr. Henry. Your motives for forwarding my letter to that gentleman, and transposing the course of the business relative to it, meets my entire approbation; and opening his letter, in answer thereto, was an act of indispensable necessity, resulting therefrom, and of course is approved.

I am not less pleased at the resolution you had taken to proceed no farther with Colo. I—s²³ than merely to sound his inclinations on the subject referred; until you shd. hear further from me. The result however, of your enquiries, be so good as to communicate.

I thank you, my good Sir, for giving me permission to trouble you on similar occasions. I shall certainly avail myself of the indulgence; and as an earnest of my disposition to do it, may I ask you what temper is it expected your Assembly will meet? How will it develope itself? And what is likely to be the progress and issue, as it relates to the General government?

Enclosed is twenty five dollars, cost of the Express, which was sent to Mr. Henry. With very great esteem etc.²⁴

23. Col. James Innes.

24. From the original through the kindness of Forest H. Sweet, of Battle Creek, Mich.

***To TOBIAS LEAR**

Philadelphia, November 2, 1795.

My dear Sir: Your letters of the 19th. and—Ult. came duly to hand; and I expected 'eer this to have been decisive upon the contents of them; but the case being otherwise, I shall postpone writing fully to you, until the next, or another Post.

It may not be amiss however, briefly to observe, that Colo. Rochfontaine (being in this city) was asked how it came to pass, as he had seen the site at the confluence of the Rivers Potomac

and Shenandoah, he had made no mention of it in his general report? His answer was, there was no ground on which convenient buildings could be placed, and assigned other reasons in a written report, which he made. But since the receipt of your last, with a letter from Genl. Darke to the Secretary of War, I have suggested his going there again, in order to view the ground more accurately. This, if nothing more pressing should require his attendance in another quarter, will be the case. I shall defer therefore saying anything further on the subject till this matter is decided. If the Colo. goes at all, he will probably pass through George Town, and if it could be made convenient for Colo. Gilpin (who understands the nature, and application of water well) and yourself, to accompany him, advantages, I am persuaded, would result from the journey. One of the Colos. objections to this site is, that no water work (on acct. of freshes) would be safe there. These lands, however, considering the reservations of the Ferries, buildings, &ca. will come much higher than I had any idea of.

If you have not already agreed for the Rent of my house in Alexandria at Sixty pounds pr

Annum, I wish this sum might be compared with other rents, before it is fixed on. I was told by severals as I passed through Alexandria, that I might readily dispose of the lot, if I was so inclined, for £1200: Sixty pounds rent wd. be only an interest of five pr Ct, which is inadequate for house Rent.

Give my love to Fanny and the Children, in which Mrs. Washington joins, and be assured of the sincere esteem etc.

[H.L.]

To ALEXANDER WHITE

Philadelphia, November 9, 1795.

Dear Sir: Your two Letters of the 31 ulto. have been recd. one by the post, the other by Mr. Hadfield: and expecting that this will find you in the federal City, I shall, being much engaged at this time refer you to my official letters to the board; as well on the proposed application for a Loan to the Legislature of Maryland, as on the case of Mr. Hadfield. A private letter of mine of the 4 inst, followed my official one on the first of these subjects: both of which you will see.

If the movements in Maryland are conducted with intelligence, the probable issue of the measure with the legislature of that State may be ascertained before any direct application or commitment is hazarded: and as a Loan is of the utmost importance, two strings may be better than one. The first,

in the manner suggested, before the meeting of Congress, if it succeeds, the other may be reserv'd as a dernier resort. if it will not bear to be touched, then there is no other alternative than an

application to Congress, a suspension of the plan, or a forced (and most certainly a depreciated) Sale; which tho' slower in its operation, will as effectually work the destruction of it. Of the three, there can be no hesitation in preferring the first of these alternatives. With esteem etc.³³

***To WILLIAM THORNTON**

Philadelphia, November 9, 1795.

Sir: I have been favoured with your letter of the 1st. instr. and thank you for the explanations and details given therein. I must however decline giving any decisive opinion on the matter referred to me, by the Board,³⁰ for the reasons which have been briefly stated in my official letter thereto. to which others might have been added, but the pressure of business at this time would not allow me to be more diffusive, and must plead my excuse for not enlarging to you.

In a decision on the case wch. has been referred to me, much will depend upon the *real* abilities of Mr. Hadfield, of which I have no adequate knowledge. If he is the man of science he is represented to be, and merits the character he brings; if his proposed alterations can be accomplished without enhancing the expence on involving delay; if he will oblige himself to carry on the building³¹ to its final completion; and if he has exhibited any specimens of being a man of industry and arrangement I should have no hesitation in giving

33. The contemporary copy is in the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge.

30. Of Commissioners of the District of Columbia.

31. The United States Capitol.

it as my opinion that his plan ought to be adopted; otherwise, his mortification will be great, and it would, in a manner, be defeating the purposes of his coming hither. On the other hand, if there be any cause suspect him of ignorance, or misrepresentation much caution, and strict investigation ought to be used. With esteem etc.³²

32. From the *Thornton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, December 14, 1795.

Gentlemen: Your Letter of the 9th. Instant, covering Mr. Law's of the 2d. with your answer, has been received.

At present I decline giving any opinion upon the subject of Mr. Law's letter, as you say the state of your finances renders it impracticable to execute the object of his wishes. When you are in a situation to begin the opening of the avenues, it is presumed those which will be more immediately useful, will be first cleared. I am etc.⁶⁴

***To RICHARD HENDERSON**

Philadelphia, January 31, 1796.

Sir: I hope you will not ascribe to incivility, an omission, which has proceeded from accident, or rather from misconception.

Immediately upon the receipt of your letter dated the 26th. of Novr. it was put into the hands of the Gentleman who temporarily discharged the duties of Secretary of State, with directions to acknowledge the receipt of it; and to inform you that the Executive was pursuing enquiries which were to lead to a final decision

64. In the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

on the Site for an Arsenal. Misconceiving the latter direction, and supposing it wd. be in time to acknowledge the receipt of your letter after the above mentioned decision was come to, it had, from the multiplicity of business in two offices, which he superintended, escaped his attention until my enquiry on the subject recalled it to his recollection.

I have now (tho' late) to inform you that another spot will, I believe, be the object of governmental choice: if not, more particular enquiry will be made of you, on what terms the Land &ca. offered by you, could be obtained. With esteem etc.

***To THOMAS JOHNSON**

Philadelphia, January 31, 1796.

Dear Sir: I am ashamed, so much after the date of it, to have the receipt of your letter of the 15th. of Decr. to acknowledge; but truth being the best apology I can make for the omission, you will receive it as follow.

Immediately upon the receipt of that letter I sent it where all other letters relative to the same subject were referred, to the Secretary of War, who was in the act of investigating circumstances attending the different sites proposed for An Arsenal on the Potomack, that the one which appeared to combine the greatest, and most numerous advantages might be preferred; with direction that he shd. acknowledge the receipt of it, and add this information thereto. Not until an enquiry within these few days, did I learn that the multiplicity of business which two Offices involves him in, had occasioned it to slip

his memory: I therefore take it upon myself to inform you that a situation above, is preferred to one below the Bleu Mountain.

With very great esteem and regard I am etc.¹⁵

***To GOVERNOR OLIVER WOLCOTT**

Philadelphia, February 1, 1796.

Sir: I have been duly honored with your letter of the 21st. Ult. announcing the death of Mr. Huntington,¹⁹ late Governor of Connecticut.

At the sametime that I regret the loss of so worthy a character, I cannot but feel consoled that the Administration of the Government of that State has fallen into such good hands as yours. And let me

pray you to accept my sincere thanks for the assurance therein given of your readiness to observe the relationship, which it bears to the general Government.

I feel equally obliged by the expression of your concern for the attacks which have been made upon my Administration. If the enlightened, and virtuous part of the Community will make allowances for my involuntary errors I will promise they shall have no cause to accuse me of wilful ones. Hoping for the first, I feel no concern on account of the latter.

Your Son,²⁰ so far as my

15. From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

19. Samuel Huntington.

20. Oliver Wolcott, jr. He was Secretary of the Treasury.

knowledge of him extends, is a very deserving character. He discharges the duties of his Office with integrity and ability; and, I am persuaded may bid defiance to all those who seem to be continually on the lookout for occasions (without being at the trouble to investigate facts) to arraign the conduct of public Officers. With great esteem and respect I am, &c.

To THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY

Philadelphia, May 15, 1796.

It will readily occur to your Majesty, that occasions may sometimes exist, on which official considerations would constrain the Chief of a Nation to be silent and passive, in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this *private* Letter to your Majesty; being persuaded, that my motives will also be my apology for it.

In common with the people of this Country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis De la Fayette; and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathize with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavour to mitigate the calamities which they experience; among which his present confinement is not the least distressing.

I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your Majesty's consideration, whether his long imprisonment, and the confiscation of his Estate, and the Indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings, which recommend him to the mediation of *Humanity*? Allow me, Sir! on this occasion to be its organ; and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this Country on such conditions and under such restrictions, as your Majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.

As it is a maxim with me not to ask what under similar circumstances, I would not grant,

your Majesty will do me the justice to believe, that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom, which form the Basis of sound Policy and durable Glory.

May the almighty and merciful Sovereign of the universe keep your Majesty under his protection and guidance.⁵⁸

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, May 22, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letters of the 13th and 14th. instant have been duly received, and the Attorney General of the United States having given his opinion relatively to the Powers of Attorney; And having pronounced the proceedings to be accordant with the Act for Guaranteeing the Loans; matters have been arranged with Mr. Gilmore for execution, and the Papers, agreeably to your desire, will be forwarded to Holland.

A duplicate of the Power of Attorney to Messrs. Wilhem and Jan Willink, is necessary to guard against the delay which would result from a miscarriage of the original. In short, as the vigorous prosecution of the Works depend upon the facility with which the Loan is obtained, no risk that can be avoided ought to be left to chance: For fatal indeed would it be to the operations in the City if a disappointment, or any considerable delay should take place. And here let me add. If I had been called upon for an opinion relative to this loan before arrangements were made with Mr. Gilmore,

58. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

I should, under my present view of the subject, have given a decided opinion against placing the *whole* of the sum, authorized to be borrowed in one year, upon this issue; if any part thereof could have been obtained in this country within, or not exceeding, the Provisions of the Law.

In all probability it will be *six months* before the result of the application in Holland will be known. This may, and from the peculiar state of things in that country 'tis not unlikely will be, unfavorable. What is to be done in that case? and what in the meantime? You have declared, yourselves, that you do not place much confidence in aids from Messrs. Morris and Nicholson, and point out no other specific resources. Notwithstanding these sentiments, I am unwilling to obstruct a measure which I presume you have considered in all its relations and chances, and have therefore given facility to your plan; wishing heartily that it may be attended with success.

The year 1800 is approaching by hasty strides; The friends of the City are extremely anxious to see the public works keep equal pace therewith. They are anxious too on another account, namely, that the Commissioners should *reside in the City* where the theatre of the business lies. This was, and is, my opinion. It is the principle, and was declared to be so at the time; upon which the present establishment of the Commissioners was formed; that, by being on the spot, and giving close attention to the operations, they might prevent abuses, or correct them in embryo. It is said, if this had been the case, those defective walls, which to put up, and pull down, have cost the public much time, labour and expence, would never have been a subject of reproach. For these, and other reasons which might be added, it is my decided opinion and expectation that the Commissioners do *reside in the City*.

And the nearer they are to the public Works the better, and more desirable it will be. I wish this as well on their own account, as on that of the public; because they would have it much more in their power to scrutinize all the movements of men and measures which are under their controul, than it is possible to do at the distance of two or three miles and periodical, or occasional visits. Being on the spot, and seeing everything that occurs, they would be better enabled to systematize the business, and have it conducted with greater œconomy; and finally, would insure to themselves those honors and consolations which flow from the punctual discharge of public trust.

I have sent your advertisement of the sale of Lotts, to the places you have requested; but I beg that it may be unequivocally understood that, I am opposed to the sale of them in large parcels, to Speculators. It might be asked, if this was to happen, and with propriety too, why give these people the profit arising between the wholesale and retail prices, when, if the same means and industry in the disposal, were used by the Commissioners, it would be saved to the public? To sell by single Lots, or at most squares, on moderate terms to those who will improve them, appear most eligible to

me. particular cases *may* arise, to render a departure from this rule necessary, but such cases must speak for themselves, and the advantages to be derived from them must be evident.

If there are any matters which you are desirous of laying before me, let me request that they may be prepared (if a decision is not required sooner) by the time I shall pass through the City; which is as likely to happen about the middle of next month, as at any period I can name at present. My stay at Mount Vernon cannot be long, and I shall have many matters of private concern to attend to while there. With great esteem etc.⁷⁵

75. From *Letters from the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

***To GUSTAVUS SCOTT**

Philadelphia, May 25, 1796.

Sir: Your favor of the 20th. inst: came to hand yesterday.

I have neither received, nor heard of an Address from the Proprietors of the Federal City. Nor do I know any more of Mr. Law's sentiments relative to the concerns of it, that I do of Tippo Saib's. The ideas conveyed in my last to the Commissioners (dated the 22d) are not of recent adoption. They are as old as the change which took place in the establishment of the Commissioners; and were the cause of that change. A combination of causes have brought them more actively, and pointedly, into view than heretofore: among which, and not the least to be regarded, are the remarks which were made during the discussion of the Guarantee Bill, even by its friends (not so much in, as out of the house); the indispensable necessity for close attention, and great exertion in all those to whom the business is entrusted; with an eye to the strictest economy under the best systems that can be formed.

You cannot, I am persuaded, be entirely unacquainted with the remarks which have been made on the want of œconmy, and due attendance to the operations which are carrying on by those who are entrusted with the management of them. Nor, acquainted as *you are* with the jealousies, and contracted views of the Proprietors, can the utmost circumspection, and the minutest attentions in the Commissionrs. to all the wheels that are in motion, and to all the persons who move them, appear unimportant. Consequently, wherever the scene of business is, there also should be the principal actors. And till this happens, the jealousies between

the upper and lower end of the City will not subside, nor will the injurious consequences flowing from them, cease. Nor indeed will it be believed, be the fact as it may, that while the Commissioners, or the major part of them (with the subordinate Agents) reside in George Town, that the concerns of the City will be conducted uninfluenced, and to the best advantage. We may dispise public opinion, and these kind of reports as we please, but they are not less injurious on that account. The time is very short in which a great deal for the reception of Congress is to be done; and no means, or exertion should be wanting to accomplish it. It would be ineligible, and highly impolitic to bring any new proposition before Congress, before the Government is fixed there.

I do not precisely know what the late Secretary of State may have written with respect to the alternative allowed the Commrs. to reside in the City, or *George Town* . But it is a fact known to everyone who ever heard me express a sentiment on the subject, that it has been decidedly in favor of the former; and that nothing but necessity, arising from the want of accommodation, could justify the latter. Nay more, it is known to the first Commissioners, that I not only coincided in opinion with them, that a house, situated between the two principal buildings should be built for their accommodation, but actually approved a plan for the purpose. Why it was laid aside, unless their going out of Office or the want of funds was the cause I am unable to say.

I have been thus particular, that you may see what my opinion *uniformly* has been; that it has not proceeded from any recent movements in the City (which were unknown to me, before your letter came to hand), and that it has appeared more necessary and has been

more pointedly mentioned, since I find that the *friends* of the City, and I presume the Community at large, conceive (as I have always done) that the measures which have been suggested, are useful and proper.

With esteem etc.⁷⁹

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, May 30, 1796.

Gentlemen: As no Mail southward of Baltimore was received at the Post Office in this City on Saturday; and as you may not have understood by my letter of the 22d. instt, that the duplicate of the Power of Attorney to Messrs. Wilhem and Jan Willink was required to be forwarded *through me* ,

I address this to you, in order to remove the doubt if any there be; as copies of the other papers are ready, and only waiting *your* duplicates, to be dispatched.

In consequence of your recommendation of Mr. Freeman,⁸⁴ he was nominated, and by the advice and consent of the Senate has been appointed, Surveyor for running the Territorial line between the United States and Spain, at the rate of (I believe of 1500\$) dollars pt. annum.

This service cannot commence before the Ratification of the Treaty by Spain, is received; and the Commissioner and Surveyor on the part of that Power are known, and ready to proceed. It will not therefore interfere with any Services *you* may require, and

79. From *District of Columbia letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

84. Thomas Freeman.

Mr. Freeman can render, until he is called upon to execute this business; which, probably, will not be before Autumn. At which time the Commissions will issue.

His request was to be employed in settling the Northern boundary between the United States and Great Britain, but the appointment of the Surveyors for that purpose is left to the Commissioners, who are to decide ultimately; I did not incline therefore to bring forward the name of any one for this service, even to our own Commissioners. With esteem. etc.⁸⁵

To ALEXANDER WHITE

(Private)

Philadelphia, June 5, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your Letter of the 25th. Ultimo from Martinsburgh, did, as you expected, come to my hands on the 3d. instant; but not untill the Mail of that day was dispatched; consequently, the Post of tomorrow will be the first, by which I can reply to the contents of it. I wish, *very much indeed*, that you could make it convenient, and agreeable to yourself, family, and business, to remain in the City Commission; and that you would prosecute to the end, the good work you have begun. I sincerely believe that this is the wish of *all* who know you, and are true friends to that place; and very sorry indeed should I be, if the absence, and attention necessary for your private concerns

(which your Letter does not sufficiently define, to enable me to form a correct judgment) should be found incompatible with the duties which are expected from the Commissioners.

85. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

It is unnecessary, I am sure, for me [to remark to you (on general ground, and reasoning) the necessity there is for the closest attention and the most vigorous exertion of the Commissioners to push this work on; But, independent of *general* considerations, a particular occurrence has happened lately wch. makes me more than ever wish you to devote as much time as possible to this business. It is this.

It is not entirely unknown to you, I believe, that I have been hinting in pretty broad terms to your Colleagues, that I did not conceive that the trust reposed in them could be satisfactorily executed while they remained at a distance from the scene of action, and held periodical meetings only; and that where there was inattention or remissness in the head, it would be found to extend itself to all the Members. Not perceiving that these hints had all the effects that was intended. Finding, from the discussion of the Guarantee Bill in Congress that serious charges were laid against the œconomy in carrying on the business; knowing that there was no way so effectual to prevent, or to correct, errors while they were in embryo as a close inspection into them while they were in a progressive state; and no measure so likely to remove jealousies as a residence of the Commissioners *in the City*, I did on the 22d. Ult. when acknowledging the receipt of their Letters of the 13th. and 14th. relative to the loan in Holland, give it as my decided opinion to that Board, that this event, for the reasons I assigned, ought to take place; and the nearer they could fix, conveniently, to the principal theatres, the more agreeable it would be.

Thus much happened before I received any advice of what was transacting in the City; but on the 1st. instant was handed to me an Address from

the Proprietors thereof, dated the 24th. preceeding, requesting me to *do* what I had actually *done*, and which I find is not at all pleasing to Mr. Scott. How it may be to Doctor Thornton I know not, having heard nothing from *him* on the Subject.

I have given you these details (in a private letter) that you may see at one view what my situation and wishes are; and the necessity there is for my preserving consistency, at least in a degree. I shall touch upon no other parts of your letter, at this time; but that you may have a dble. chance of receiving these sentiments soon, this letter shall be forwarded to Winchester, and a duplicate lodged in the Post Office in Washington, that if you miss the first, the other may be found there on your arrival.

On other subjects I will converse with you when we meet in the Federal City, where it is probable I shall be about the 16th instant, if nothing (at present unforeseen) happens to prevent it.

With sincere esteem etc.]⁸⁷

***To CYRUS GRIFFIN**

Philadelphia, June 8, 1796.

Sir: I am sorry, that without being accused, you should think it necessary to go into a lengthy justification of your conduct and principles.

What the entire design of your letter of the 23d. ulto.⁸⁹ may be, I am at a loss to conceive; and pressed as I have been, and still am, on all sides, in the discharge of my public functions, I have no leisure to enquire. If the object of it (among other things) is to intimate that you have been overlooked in some recent appointments, I can

87. The first part of this draft is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers*; the last part in the *Washington Papers*. The part within the brackets is in the writing of Washington; the other is in an unidentified writing.

89. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

only say, that nominations are made from the best view I am able to take of the cases which come before me. in doing which I have often, if not always, where the appointments are not of a local nature, found it necessary to combine a variety of considerations, none of which, however, have originated from a desire to serve a friend or relation; or a wish to oblige this, or that man, or set of men; but from the information I can obtain (where I have no personal knowledge) of the fitness of characters to offices.

That I may have erred, and in many instances made injudicious nominations, is highly probable: wonderful indeed would it be, if the case was otherwise; but numerous, and chagreening as disappointments may have been to individuals (and abundant they are) I can defy malignancy itself to ascribe partiality, or interested motives to any of my nominations; or omissions, to prejudice or dislike. I have naught therefore, on this score to reproach myself with.

For the attachment you have professed for my person and administration, I pray you to accept my best thanks, and the assurances of the esteem and regard with which I am &c.

***To THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

Philadelphia, June 9, 1796.

Sir: The Instructions for Mr. King, herewith returned, appear to me to be proper. To them, however, I think might be added a desire that, he should attempt to remove any doubts which may arise in the construction of the Article relative to our Trade with the East Indies; and to get relieved if it be practicable from the restrictions on our Vessels going from thence with their Cargoes to China.

I shall not impede the forwarding of the other Instructions to the Accomptant, for the British Spoliations, as they are now drawn. At the sametime I cannot forbear observing that I think £500 Sterling would have been ample compensation for such a character.

1st. Because no such Officer was conceived necessary by the Negotiators of the Treaty; nor provided for in the estimate to Congress.

2d. Because among other inducements to the appointment of Mr. Gore,⁹³ his supposed knowledge of Commerce was one (a legal and Commercial character being deemed necessary for the purposes of the Commission.) Why then it may be asked, seek for the latter character in an Accountant of *new creation* un contemplated by the Treaty? And this question more than probable will be accompanied with the charge of favoritism to the wishes of the person designated and his friends, and,

4th. [*sic*] Because our Secretaries of Legation are not allowed half what is proposed to be given as compensation to this Accountant.

93. Christopher Gore, of Massachusetts. He was United States Commissioner for carrying into execution the 7th Article of Jay's Treaty.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, June 10, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letters of the 31st. Ult. and 3d. Instant, came to hand by the same Mail, on tuesday last.

The Duplicate of the Powers to Messrs. Willink's, have been handed over, for the purpose of transmission. Triplicates, signed by a full board may not be amiss. I will receive them however at the City.

I am very glad to hear that you have recommenced your operations on the public buildings: exceedingly is it to be wished, that you may be able to proceed therein with vigour. I much question whether *any* of the Banks in *this* City are to be relied on for a loan. The reason for this, needs no explanation. I shall, however, mention the matter to the Secretary of the Treasury; and what I can do, consistently with my official character, may be relied on. If, as I expect to do, I should receive money for some of my Western Lands which have been sold, I will (though it will be little more than a drop in the Bucket) pay the *whole* sum due from me for the lots I hold in the City; and request that the account (agreeably to the terms of Sale) may be made out accordingly, against my arrival. In the last Instalments, I conceive I have been charged more than was due: this, if true, can be rectified by having recourse to the dates of the Sales, times of payment, and the sums paid. Mr. Morris, I am informed, talks of visiting the City in the course of next week. You, probably, have better data than I possess, to form an opinion of the certainty of it, and the result.

Thinking it probable that I shall be in the Federal City the latter end of next Week, provided nothing new occurs, I shall only add that with great esteem etc.⁹⁷

97. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1796.

Gentlemen: On thursday last I received your letter of the 22d. instant, with its enclosures; and should have answered it by the Post of next day, but for many letters which I had to write by that Mail; which prevented my doing it till the succeeding one.

Approving of the proposed Suspension (until the first Monday [in December] of the year 1800) of the first and third articles of the terms and conditions declared on the 17th. day of October 1791 for

regulating the materials, and manner of buildings and improvements on the lots in the City; I have subscribed, and do now return the Instrument¹⁰ you forwarded to me, and give it as my opinion that the sooner, and more generally it is promulgated, the better, and more advantageous it will be.

I am glad to hear you have receive fresh assurances of considerable pecuniary aids from Messrs. Morris and Nicholson; and especially, that this assurance has occasioned no relaxation in your other endeavors to obtain a loan.

The strong impression I am under of the indispensable necessity of close attention, and great exertion to prepare for the reception of Congress by the year 1800, must, in addition to the propriety of the measure, apologize for my urging again, that those on whom the operation of the works materially depend, may be compelled to take their Stations convenient to the same. It cannot be tolerated, that the Superintendant, and others, whose duty it is to see that everything moves harmoniously as well as œconomically; and who to effect these ought always to be on the

10. This "instrument" is the Executive Order of June 25, the original signed document of which is in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress. It directs the suspension until the first Monday in December, in the year 1800, of the first and third regulations of Oct. 17, 1791, whereby no house wall could be higher than 40 feet in any part of the city, and none should be lower than 30 feet on any of the avenues; and that "all the houses which shall be erected in the said City of Washington, prior to the first Monday in December, one thousand, eight hundred, conformable, in other respects, to the Regulations aforesaid, shall be considered as lawfully erected."

spot, to receive applications and to provide instantaneously for wants; should be at the distance of three miles from the active scenes of their employments. The convenience of those who receive compensations from the public, cannot, must not, be the primary object of consideration; for sure I am (be the State and condition of the public buildings in the year 1800 what they may) there will not be accommodation for Congress at *that* period within, such a distance of the Capitol as to induce a removal, if those whose particular duty it is to be there, and to set an example, hang aloof, and fix the attraction another way. The consequences of such a deficiency, not only to the City, but to George Town, and all the interest thereabouts, is too evident to stand in need of prediction.

If I am urgent on this point, it is from the clearest conviction of the utility of the measure; and not from a desire to incommode one person, or to gratify another. Of this I beg you to be persuaded; as also, that with great esteem etc.¹¹

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Mount Vernon, July 1, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your two letters, dated the 29th. Ultio, have been received. The enclosures for the several Printers, to whom they are directed, are franked; and will go with

11. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

this, and other letters to the Post Office this afternoon. I do not think it would be amiss to add Hartford, in Connecticut (a paper of extensive circulation altho' I do not recollect the name of the Editor of it) and some Gazette in North Carolina, to your list of publications.

The decisive manner in which you treated the notification of Mr. Hadfield, was, in my opinion, very proper. There ought to be no trifling in these matters. Coaxing a man to stay in Office, or to do his duty while he is in it, is not the way to accomplish the object.

Having received (by the last Post) the certificates I wrote to Philadelphia for, I enclose them, with the Power of Attorney to Messrs. Willinks, that you may forward them by the first conveyance that offers. I am not in the way to hear of any.

The continual disappointments of Messrs. Morris and Nicholson are really painful. One would hope that their assurances were not calculated for delay, and yet they seem to admit of hardly any other interpretation. An answer from the Secretary of the Treasury might, and I think ought to have been received by you, on Wednesday last.

With esteem etc.²⁸

28. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Mount Vernon, July 4, 1796.

Sir: If the public dispatches which I receive, and am obliged to answer by every Post, would permit; I would go more into detail and explanation of the subject of your last (seperate) letter, than it is possible for me to do at present. I will not, however, let it pass without some further expression of my ideas; and the understanding I always had of your entrance into the Office you now hold, in the Federal City.

That the Secretary of State's letter to you (which I have not by me at this place to resort to) may have been so worded as to leave the alternative of residing in the City, or in George Town; is not necessary, if it was justifiable, to deny; because a change of circumstances would certainly authorise a change of measures. But independent of this, it must not be forgotten, that at the time the letter above alluded to was written, such an alternative was indispensable, for as much as there were no *convenient* accommodations for the Commissioners *in the City*; and because houses could not be erected in a moment, under the circumstances which then existed. In addition to this, let it be remembered also, that the first Corers. sensible of the propriety, and advantages which would result therefrom, had resolved to build a house for their own accommodation at, or near the spot where the Hotel now stands; and were diverted from it (if my memory serves me) partly by two causes; first, from a doubt of the propriety of such an application of public money; and 2dly. from an opinion that they could be accommodated in the Hotel, when built; which, it was expected would have happened long since.

I mention these things to shew there has been no inconsistency in my sentiments or conduct; and that to enable the Commissioners to comply with the views of Government, and to devote their time to its service, the present Compensation was resolved on.

Your other allegation is of a more serious nature; and if deception withdrew you from what you deemed a permanent establishment at Baltimore, it cannot be justified. But be assured, Sir, this is a new view of the subject; and that the proposal to you, to become a Commissioner, originated in assurances, confidently given to me, that you had resolved to remove to the Federal City, or to George Town; and because I knew you had a considerable interest in the vicinity of them. Was not the first application to you predicated on this information?

But I must be explicit in declaring, that not only to obviate the suspicions and jealousies which proceed from a residence of the Commissioners without the City, or in a remote corner of it, not only that they may be, where the busy and important scenes are transacting, that they may judge of the conduct of others not from *Reports only*, but from ocular proof, as the surest guide to Oeconomy and dispatch; Independent I say of these considerations, which are momentous of themselves, I should view the Residence of the Commissioners of the City, and their Officers of different Grades,

in some central part of it as a nest egg (pardon the expression) which will attract others, and prove the *surest* means of accomplishing the great object which all have in view; the removal of Congress at the appointed time; without which, every thing

will become stagnant, and your sanguine hopes blasted.

To be frank, I must give it to you as *my* opinion, that in relation to the concerns of the City, the Commissioners stand precisely in the same light (if not in a stronger one) that each does to any interesting matter in a train of execution for himself. Would you then, notwithstanding you may have an Architect to carry on your buildings on Rock Hill, and a man to superintend [*sic*] your attending labourers, trust [to their proceeding] without your minute Inspection of their conduct? I think, and am sure you will answer, no. I do not mean by this question to exhibit a charge, for I do as truly tell you, that I do not know, or ever heard, how often you visit your own concerns there. It is upon general principles I argue. A man of Industry and exertion will not, on his own acct. have a work of that sort on hand without giving close attention to it. And certain it is, the Obligation (because of the responsibility) is at least equally great when entrusted by the Public.

After all, as the season is now far advanced, houses, in the situation I have described as most eligible, may not be to be rented. I am not unwilling that the removal of the *Commissioners* if they find much inconvenience in doing it, may be suspended untill the commencement of the operations of next Spring, when it will certainly be expected; and if known, I have *no* doubt but that houses will be prepared for their accommodation by that time.

You will from the length of this letter, with difficulty give credit to my assertion in the beginning of it; but as a proof, not only of its verity, but of the friendship and candour with which it is written,

it shall go to you in its present rough garb; and with all its imperfections, accompanied with assurances of the esteem and regard, &c.³²

***To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

Mount Vernon, July 6, 1796.

Sir: Having shewn you the answr of the French Minister, to the communication of the Secretary of State, relatively to the Capture of the Ship Mount Vernon, by the French Privateer Flying Fish. Having read you also, the contents of a letter from —⁴⁶ respecting information from St. Domingo, of the intended measures of the French government, to Harrass our Commerce with Great Britain; and

also my letter to the Secretary of State on that Subject; to which I have, by the last Mail, received the enclosed acknowledgment.' Let me now ask what you think of the opinion therein given, respecting the recall of our Minister at Paris? Whether *that* act will authorise the appointment of an Envoy Extraordinary, or Minister Plenipotentiary? Whether it is, in that case, expedient to do it under *present* circumstances, as far as they are known, or await a further developement of his conduct and the views of the Directory of France?⁴⁷ And in case it is judged expedient to send a Person to Paris, to explain the motives for the conduct of this government, and to ascertain the views of that, Whether you think either of the Characters mentioned in the Secretary of State's letter would go? and whether there be any other occurring to you as eligible? Would Doctr. McClerg⁴⁸ go? and does he possess fit abilities if he would accept?

Answer all these queries as soon as you

32. In the writing of George Washington Craik in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress. The words in brackets are in the writing of Washington.

46. Monsieur Santhonax. Quoted by Alexander Hamilton in his letter to Washington (not dated), but received and filed under date of June 23, 1796, in the *Washington Papers*.

47. The queries had already been decided by the Cabinet meeting of July 2, which report had not then reached Washington. It was, in part, "that the Executive has not the power, in the recess of the Senate, to originate the appointment of a *minister extraordinary* to France; and that the recall of Mr. Monroe, by creating a vacancy, can alone authorize the sending of a new Minister to that Country. On the expediency of this change we are agreed. We think the great interests of the United States require that they have near the French Government some faithful organ to explain their real views and to ascertain those of the French. Our duty obliges us to be explicit. Altho' the present Minister plenipotentiary of the United States at Paris has been amply furnished with documents to explain the views and conduct of the United States, yet his own letters authorize us to say, that he has omitted to use them, and thereby exposed the U States to all the mischiefs which could flow from jealousies and erroneous conceptions of their views and conduct. Whether this dangerous omission arose from such an attachment to the cause of France as rendered him too little mindful of the interests of his own Country, or from mistaken views of the latter, or from any other cause, the evil is the same. We therefore conceive it to be indispensably necessary that the present Minister plenipotentiary of the United States at Paris should be recalled, and another American citizen appointed in his stead. Such being our opinion, we beg leave to name for your consideration Patrick Henry and John Marshall of Virginia, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and William Smith of South Carolina; either of whom would, we believe, so explain the conduct and views of the U. States as to

satisfy the French Republic, and thereby remove the danger of a rupture or inconvenient controversy with that nation; or failing of this desirable effect, to satisfy the Citizens of the U States that the fault was not to be imputed to their own Government.

"In confirmation of our opinion of the expediency of recalling Mr. Monroe, we think the occasion requires that we communicate a private letter from him which came to our hands since you left Philadelphia. This letter corresponds with other intelligence of his political opinions and conduct. A minister who has thus made the notorious enemies of the whole system of the government his confidential correspondents in matters which affect that Government, cannot be relied on to do his duty to the latter. This private letter we received in confidence. Among other circumstances that will occur to your recollection, the anonymous letters from France to Thos. Blount and others are very noticeable. We know that Montflorenc was the writer, and that he was the Chancellor of the Consul Skipwith; and from the connexion of Mr. Monroe with those persons, we can entertain no doubt that the anonymous letters were written with his privity.

"These anonymous communications from officers of the United States in a foreign Country, on matters of a public nature, and which deeply concern the interests of the United States, in relation to that foreign Country, are proofs of sinister designs, and shew that the public interests are no longer safe in the hands of such men.

"The information contained in the confidential communication you were pleased to make to us on the project of the French Government relative to the Commerce of the U States, is confirmed by the open publication of the same substantially and more minutely in the News-papers. Mr. Fenno's in which it first appeared, we now enclose. The execution of the project even appears to have been commenced. The following article is in Mr. Fenno's paper of the 28th Ultio.

"New London June 23d. Arrived brig *Aurora*, S. Wadsworth of Hartford, in fourteen days from port-au paix. Left there sloop *Crisis*, Cook of Norwich, with mules; sloop *Scrub*, Williams of Middletown; and a brig from Philadelphia; all carried in by French privateers. It was not pretended to make prizes of them; but their Cargoes were taken by the administration, at their own price, and due-bills given therefor. Those who go there to trade and those carried in, are all treated alike. Capt. Wadsworth received a due bill for 11,000 livres."

48. Dr. James McClurg (McClerg), of Virginia.

conveniently can. And let me have the draught you promised (on Monday last) for the purpose of supplying the deficiency in the Act for the relief of Seamen.

Make frequent inquiries for a fit character to fill the Office of Surveyor General. I wish much to have it ably executed.

***To JOHN MARSHALL**

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 15, 1796.

Dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 11th instant, and regret that present circumstances should deprive our country of the Services which I am confident your going to France, at this time, would have rendered it. It is difficult to fill some Offices with characters which would fit them in all respects. Another case of this sort is now before me: namely, that of Surveyor General. A gentleman well qualified to discharge the duties of this Office was appointed, but has declined accepting it. Several others have been mentioned, but the recommendations of them have gone more to the general respectability of their characters than their Scientific knowledge; whilst both are equally essential. For it is a trust, which in the execution, requires skill to arrange, instruct, Inspect and report correctly, the conduct of others; and integrity to resist the temptation which opportunities, and an overweening fondness for speculation in Lands, may throw in his way.

Among the characters from the State of Virginia who have been presented to my view, on this occasion, are Generals Wood and Posey, and Colonels Tinsley⁷⁶ and Anderson; the last of whom is, I believe, an inhabitant of Kentucky; and having been in that line, the presumption ought to be, that his mathematical knowledge (which should extend beyond common Surveying) is adequate to the duties which would be required. But how he is in other respects, and what may be the course of his politics, I know *nothing* ; and but *little* of those of the other three; particularly of Tinsley's. The object therefore of writing this letter to you, is, to ask confidentially, such information as you possess, can acquire, and give me respecting the qualifications of the Gentlemen; or of any other fit character that may occur to you for Surveyor General; accordant with the ideas I have expressed above. The Office is important and respectable; of course the incumbent besides his scientific abilities, should possess a celebrity of character that would justify the appointment. To learn your sentiments of the characters, and on the points I have mentioned, will be in time when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you, on your way to Philadelphia.

With very great esteem etc.

***To WILHELM LOUIS WERNECKE**

Mount Vernon, August 3, 1796.

Sir: I am directed by the President of the United States to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to him, dated the 24th. of July. To express his concern that your prospect of recovering the Estate, which

76. James Wood, Thomas Posey, and Thomas Tinsley.

From an extract of Benjamin H. Latrobe's diary, July 16, 1796, describing his visit to Mount Vernon: "The President came to me. He was dressed in a plain blue coat, his hair dressed and powdered. There was a reserve, but no hauteur, in his manner....I told him of the silver mine at Rocketts. He laughed most heartily at the very mention of the thing...He made several very minute enquiries concerning it, and then said 'It would give him real uneasiness should any silver or gold be discovered that would tempt considerable capital into the prosecution of that object, and that he heartily wished for his country that it might contain no mines, but those that the plough could reach excepting only coal and iron.'...Dinner was served at about half past three...he placed me at the left hand of Mrs. Washington, Miss Custis seated at her right, and himself next to her about the middle of the table. There was very little conversation during dinner. A few jokes passed between the President and young Lafayette whom he treats more like a child than a guest. I felt a little embarrassed at the quiet reserved air that prevailed. As I drink no wine and the President drank only three glasses, the party soon returned to the Portico....Coffee was brought about six oclock. ...Breakfast was served up in the usual Virginia style, tea coffee and cold boiled meat; and for an hour afterwards he [Washington] stood on the steps of the west door talking to the Company who were collected around him. His subject was principally the Establishment of the university at the Federal City. He mentioned the offer he had made of giving to it all the interest he had in the City on condition that it should go on in a given time, and complained that though magnificent offers had been made by many speculators for the same purpose there seemed to be no inclination to carry them into Effect. He spoke as if he felt a little hurt upon the subject...as soon as my servant came up he went to him and asked 'if he had breakfasted.' He then shook me by the hand...Washington has something uncommonly commanding and majestic in his walk, his address his figure and his countenance, His face is characterised by more intense and powerful thought than by quick and fiery conception. There is a mildness about his expression and an air of reserve in his manner covers its tone still more. He is about 64 but appears some years younger, and has sufficient apparent signs to his many years. He was sometimes entirely silent for many minutes, during which time

an awkwardness seemed to prevail in every one present. His answers were sometimes short and approached to moroseness. He did not, at anytime, speak with any remarkable fluency. Perhaps the extreme correctness of his language which almost seemed studied produced this effect. He appeared to enjoy a humorous observation and made several himself. He laughed heartily some times and in a very good humored manner. On the morning of my departure he treated me as if I had lived years in his house with ease and attention. But in general I thought there was a slight air of moroseness about him as if something had vexed him." The original of this extract by J. H. B. Latrobe was made for President Hayes in November, 1878, and is now in the Hayes Memorial Library,, Fremont, Ohio.

you are in pursuit of,¹³ is so unpromising; and to add, that Mr. Erdman who Interpreted between you, either greatly misunderstood *him* , or *you* have greatly misunderstood Mr. Erdman; for that so far from promising to have any Agency in the business, he requested that Gentleman to inform you, in explicit terms, that he could not meddle in the affair at all. That the Courts of Justice (over whom he had no controul) were alone competent to decide on the justice and equity of your claim, and that it was to one of these if the person in possession would not surrender the Estate you would be obliged to resort for the purpose of establishing your title, if good. This he directs me to repeat to you again; and to assure you that it is Law alone not men that governs in this Country.

His advice to you however, is, to lay all your title papers before some eminent Lawyer in Richmond, (of whom there are many), and as you are not in Cash to fee him well (which in this, as in most other Countries is essential) to inform the Gentlemen you employ (if he thinks your title good, and worth prosecuting) that he shall receive a certain sum, or a certain proportion of whatsoever he shall recover if he succeeds; but that you are unable to pay any thing if he does not.

This, at the sametime that it will involve you in no expence, will be a stimulus to his exertions; and seems to be the best, indeed the only mode (in your circumstances), by which the business can be prosecuted. I am etc.¹⁴

13. In Bartholomew Dandridge's letter of Aug. 10, 1796, to Washington, he notes that Wernecke had gone to Virginia "to look after the Estate which he has been in pursuit of. I retain the letter for him therefore, supposing it of no consequence that he should have it." Dandridge's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

14. The letter sent was, presumably, in the writing of and signed by George Washington Craik.

To HENRY GLEN³¹

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Sir: As it appears by the Secretary of Wars letter to me, that you have lately been to the Forts of Osnego³² and Niagara and must have a competent knowledge of the time and manner of making a tour to the latter, I request the favor of you, as well for my own satisfaction, as to enable me to answer the enquiries of others, to solve the following questions in detail, viz:

How long would it take a *small* party, unincumbered with heavy baggage; who should not, on the journey waste time unnecessarily, nor proceed so as to fatigue themselves, to perform this Tour from the *City* of New York?

To explain what I mean, by desiring that the above question may be answered in detail, permit me to propound the following queries:

1st. What is the usual time in going from New York to Albany by Water conveyance? the same by land?

2d. Is a passage in the Packets, or Stages, always to be had from N. York?

3d. What time does it require to go from Albany to Fort Schuyler (or Stanwix) by Water? the same by land?

4th. Could a light Boat, or two, according to circumstances, with Batteau men *always* be had at Schenectady? On what terms?

5th. If Boats are not to be had, could Horses be hired at Schenectady to go to Fort Schuyler?

6th. How long in getting from Fort Schuyler to Fort Osnego? Would there be any certain dependence of procuring Craft at the former, to descend by the Wood Creek, &ca. &ca. to the latter? And whether with the assistance of a Cloak, and a little roughing, one could pass through that

31. Of Schenectady, N.Y.

32. Oswego.

Country without carrying tents or bedding? and would moreover be supplied with Provisions, if not taken along?

7th. What is the usual passage from Osnego to Niagara? Could there be any dependance on a Vessel at the former (as we have none of our own) without risking an uncertain, perhaps tedious delay? And is there any way, in case this should be likely to happen, of going by land? What is the distance, and are there any settlements, and a Road between those places?

Answers as full and precise, as the nature of the case, and your knowledge of circumstances will enable you to give, would go near to ascertain the time required to perform this route in; and the provision, necessary to be made for it. After requesting these, as soon as you can conveniently give them, and apologizing for the trouble you will have in complying with this request, I have only to add that with very great esteem, I am etc.

P.S. Would such Batteaux as could be obtained at Schenectady be fit to perform the *whole* voyage to Niagara? And in that case could they be engaged for it with *proper* hands? ³³

33. In the writing of George Washington Craik. The P.S. is in the writing of Washington.

To THE POSTMASTER GENERAL²⁵

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Sir: You were obliging enough a few Posts ago, to send young Mr. Lafayette a dead letter, which had been deposited in your Office (from his friends in Europe).

As his anxiety to hear from, or of his Parents, can only be exceeded by his uneasiness at their unhappy situation; I pray you to direct the deputy Post masters in the Sea-Port Towns, if any letters with his Superscription thereon, or that of Mr. Frestal (to whose care he is committed) should get to their Offices, to put them under a cover to me.

This would avoid delay; insure their safe delivery; and might be a source of consolation to the young Gentleman. With Esteem, etc.²⁶

***To THE SECRETARY OF WAR**

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your private letter of the 3d. instant, accompanying the Official one of the same date, came to hand by the last Post. The draught of the letter to the Governor of Georgia is approved. I have added a word or two to the last paragraph but one, by way of *hint*, where we shall look for the cause, if Peace is not preserved on the frontier of that State.²⁹

I request that you would *begin* to note the occurrences that have happened in the War Department (since the Adjournment of Congress) which will

25. Joseph Habersham.

26. In the writing of George Washington Craik.

29. See Washington's letter to the Secretary of War, July 22, 1796, *ante*.

require to be communicated to that body in the Speech, or by messages, at the next Session. It is from the materials furnished by each Department, and the Memorandums taken by myself, that the first is framed; and it will be an omission, not to commit these to writing in the moment they occur; it being much easier to select, than to collect matter, for these purposes, when the hour arrives for digesting them into form. If other things (although they may be extraneous to your department) should occur, let them be noted also. It is better to have them *in all* than to *escape all* the Memorandums I shall be furnished with. I am etc.³⁰

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

Dear Sir: Colo. Hawkins is now here, on his way to Philadelphia, and proposes to proceed in the Stage of to morrow.

He has related many matters, and read many papers relative to the Treaty with the Creek Indians; the conduct of the State Commissioners of Georgia; &ca. &ca. But, as this is not the regular way of bringing business of this sort before me, I have requested that he and Mr. Clymer (who he supposes will be in Philadelphia before him) will report to you, not only what appertains to the Commission, but their observations and remarks *generally* as may be interesting for the government to be informed of, for the regulation of its conduct in that quarter. I wish you, therefore to be minute in your enquiries and entries.

30. From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

My present intention, is to leave this about the middle of next Week for Philadelphia, but as I shall spend a day in the Federal City, and on account of the weather, propose to travel slow, it will, probably, be the middle of the Week after before I shall arrive there. With very great esteem etc.³⁸

***To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY**

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 3d. Instant did not get to my hands until the 8th. I most assuredly wrote the letter mentioned in my last; but I find it is no uncommon thing for my letters to miscarry. The originals to Genl. Pickney [*sic*] of the — Ulto. (one of which containing 300 dollrs. in Bank notes for the sufferers by fire in Charleston) had not been received by that Gentleman on the 26th. of that Month, altho' duplicates dispatched eight days afterwards, had. I have heard of no miscarriage of a Mail, and I have evidence that the above letters (under one cover) proceeded *safely*, as far as Richmond.

General Pinckney accepts the appointment to France, and will, very shortly, with his lady, be in Philadelphia to embark. As this circumstance will furnish a new Subject for envenomed Pens, it merits consideration how far the causes which have occasioned it, should, *unofficially*, be spoken of by the Officers of the Government.

Let me desire that you would *begin* to note such occurrences (not only those in your own Department, but all others which may occasionally present themselves) as may be fit and proper to communicate to Congress at their

38. In the writing of George Washington Craik. The letter sent is an A. L. S. and is said to be in the Buffalo Historical Society.

next Session. It is from these materials, and such Memorandums as I take myself, my speech is composed. It is better to note down *every* thing which *may* be requisite on this occasion, than to omit *any* thing; because it is easier to select, than to collect matter, at the moment I am going to compose it.

I am sorry the Treasury is unable to answer all the appropriated calls upon it. My present intention is to leave this for Philadelphia in the course of next Week, but as I shall travel slow, and have to halt a day or two on the Road, my arrival there is a little uncertain. With very great esteem etc.

[C.H.S.]

To JOHN MARSHALL

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

Dear Sir: If you can recollect by whom, or in what manner the letter for General Pinckney, which went under cover to you, was sent to the Post office in Richmond, I would thank you for information respecting it.

That Letter, with a note inclosed therein, containing three Bank Bills for one hundred Dollars each, for the sufferers by fire in Charleston, had not on the 26th. of July been received by that Gentleman; although duplicates written *after* I had been favored with your answer has been acknowledged by him.

In confidence, I inform you that Genl. Pinckney accepts the appointment to France, and will soon be in Philada. to prepare for the Mission.

With very great esteem etc.³⁷

***To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY**

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

My dear Sir: With sincere pleasure I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th Ultio; learning by it that you may be so soon expected with your lady in Phila. to proceed on the Mission to Fre.

If this letter should find you in Charleston, it is intended to express A regret that my original letters had not been received by you; and to ask, if there has been any miscarriage of a Mail in the Southern quarter; aiming thereby to come at some clue to the discovery of this accident. The sum sent was three hundred dollars in 3 Bank notes of Columbia.

My best respects attend Mrs. Pinckney, and with Affecte. regard etc.

37. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***FAREWELL ADDRESS⁸⁴**

United States, September 19, 1796.

Friends, and Fellow-Citizens: The period for a new election of a Citizen, to Administer the Executive government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person, who is to be cloathed with that important trust,⁸⁵ it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken, without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country, and that, in with drawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but⁸⁶ am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your Suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives, which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return

84. On September 15 Washington submitted the Farewell Address to the Cabinet. Pickering wrote to him that same day (September 15): "The paper you put into my hands to-day was attentively perused by us all. I am now going over it by myself, but it will not be possible to get thro' in time to return it Before bed-time. Before breakfast in the morning I will wait upon you with it." Pickering's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

David C. Claypoole's account of the publication of the Address is printed by Paltsits. An extract follows: "A few days before the appearance of this highly interesting document in print, I received a message from the President, by his private secretary, Col. Lear, signifying his desire to see me. I waited on him at the appointed time, and found him sitting alone in the drawing-room. He received me very kindly, and after I had paid my respects to him, desired me to take a seat near him; then addressing himself to me, said, that he had for some time contemplated retiring from public life, and had at length concluded to do so at the end of the (then) present term: that he had some thoughts and reflections on the occasion, which he deemed proper to communicate to the people of the United States, in the form of an address, and which he wished to appear in the Daily Advertiser, of which I was Proprietor and editor. He paused, and I took occasion to thank him for having selected that paper as the channel of communication to the Public, especially as I viewed this choice as an evidence of his approbation of the principles and manner in which the work was conducted. He silently assented, and asked me when I could make the publication. I answered that the time should be made perfectly convenient to himself, and the following Monday was fixed on: he then said that his secretary would deliver me the Copy on the next morning (Friday), and I withdrew. After the *proof sheet* had been carefully compared with the copy, and corrected by myself, I carried two different Revises, to be examined by the President; who made but few alterations from the original, except in the punctuation, in which he was very minute. The publication of the Address, dated 'United States, September 17th, 1796' being completed on the 19th [bearing the same date with the Paper, Sept. 19th, 1796, being completed], I waited on the President with the original; and, in presenting it to him, expressed my regret at parting with it, and how much I should be gratified by being permitted to retain it: upon which in the most obliging manner, he handed it back to me, saying, that if I wished for it, I might keep it;— and I then took my leave."

Sparks, who prints the Farewell Address from the publication of it in Claypoole's *American Daily Advertiser*, of Sept. 19, 1796, states that he copies the following indorsement (which is in the writing

of Washington) on Claypoole's paper, "designed as an instruction to the copyist, who recorded the Address in the letter-book: The letter contained in this gazette, addressed 'To the People of the United States,' is to be recorded, and in the order of its date. Let it have a blank page before and after it, so as to stand distinct. Let it be written with a letter larger and fuller than the common recording hand. And where words are printed with capital letters, it is to be done so in recording. And those other words, that are printed in italics, must be scored underneath and straight by a ruler." This newspaper, with Washington's indorsement thereon, is not now found in the *Washington Papers*. Claypoole's paper printed the Address as dated September 17, which date is followed by Sparks.

85. At this point the words "for another term" are crossed out.

86. The words "act under" are crossed out.

to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last Election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our Affairs with foreign Nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice, that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty, or propriety; and⁸⁷ am persuaded whatever partiality⁸⁸ may be retained for my services, that⁸⁹ in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions,⁹⁰ with which I first⁹¹ undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have, with good intentions, contributed⁹² towards the Organization and Administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has⁹³ strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the encreasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services,

87. The word "that" is crossed out.

88. The words "any portion of you may yet retain" are crossed out.

89. The words "even they" are crossed out.

90. The word "under" is crossed out.

91. The word "accepted" is crossed out.

92. The word "to" is crossed out.

93. The words "not lessened" are crossed out.

they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotim does not forbid it.⁹⁴

In looking forward to the moment, which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment⁹⁵ of that debt of gratitude wch. I owe to my beloved country, for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the stedfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal⁹⁶ to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that,⁹⁷ under circumstances in which the Passions agitated in every direction were liable to⁹⁸ mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, viscissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of Success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and⁹⁹ a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows¹ that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your Union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its Administration in every department may be

94. Here are crossed out the words: "May I also have that of knowing in my retreat, that the involuntary errors, I have probably committed, have been the sources of no serious or lasting mischief to our country. I may then expect to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government; the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, I trust, of our mutual cares,

dangers and labours." Opposite this deleted paragraph, Washington has written, in the margin: "obliterated to avoid the imputation of affected modesty."

95. The words "demanded by" are crossed out.

96. The words "in usefulness" are crossed out.

97. The words "the constancy of your support" are crossed out.

98. The words "wander and fluctuate" are crossed out.

99. The word "the" is crossed out.

1. The words "the only return I can henceforth make" are crossed out.

stamped with wisdom and Virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory² of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude,³ urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments; which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation,⁴ and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a People. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The Unity of Government which constitutes you one people is also now dear

2. The words "or satisfaction" are crossed out.

3. The words "encouraged by the remembrance of your indulgent reception of my sentiments on an occasion not dissimilar to the present, urge me to offer" are crossed out.

4. The words "and experience" are crossed out.

to you. It is justly so; for it is a main Pillar in the Edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home; your peace abroad; of your safety;⁵ of your prosperity;⁶ of that very Liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from⁷ different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish⁸ a cordial, habitual and immoveable attachment⁹ to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our Country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens¹⁰ by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American , which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any

5. The words "in every relation" are crossed out.

6. The words "in every shape" are crossed out.

7. The word "various" is crossed out.

8. The words "towards it" are crossed out.

9. The words "that you should accustom yourselves to reverence it as the palladium of your political safety and prosperity, adapting constantly your words and actions to that momentous idea; that you should watch for its preservation with jealous anxiety, discountenance whatever may suggest a

suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and frown upon the first dawning of any attempt to alienate any portion of our Country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the several parts," are crossed out.

10. The words "of a common country by birth or choice" are crossed out.

appellation¹¹ derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same Religion, Manners, Habits and political Principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils, and joint efforts; of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your Interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole.

The *North* , in an unrestrained¹² intercourse with the *South* , protected by the equal Laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter,¹³ great additional resources of Maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *South* in the same Intercourse, benefitting by the Agency of the *North* , sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North* , it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the National navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a Maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The *East* , in a like intercourse with the *West* , already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will

11. The words "to be" are crossed out.

12. The word "fettered" is crossed out.

13. The words "many of them peculiar" are crossed out.

more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the *secure* enjoyment of indispensable *outlets* for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future Maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of Interest as *one*

Nation.¹⁴ Any other tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage,¹⁵ whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign Power, must be intrinsically precarious.¹⁶

¹⁷ While then every part of our country thus¹⁸ feels an immediate and particular Interest in Union, all the parts¹⁹ combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts²⁰ greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their Peace by foreign Nations; and,²¹ what is of inestimable value! they must derive from Union an exemption from those broils and Wars between themselves, which²² so frequently afflict neighbouring countries, not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown Military establishments, which under any form of Government are inauspicious to liberty, and which²³ are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty: In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be

14. The word "The" is crossed out.

15. The word "either" is crossed out.

16. The words "habit every moment to be disturbed by the fluctuating combinations of the primary interests of Europe, which must be expected to regulate the conduct of the Nations of which it is composed." are crossed out.

17. The word "And" is crossed out.

18. The word "finds" is crossed out.

19. The words "of it" are crossed out.

20. The words "cannot fail to find" are crossed out.

21. The words "which is an advantage" are crossed out.

22. The word "inevitably" is crossed out.

23. The words "there is reason to" are crossed out.

considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to²⁴ every reflecting and virtuous mind, and²⁵ exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of Patriotic desire. Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal.²⁶ We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective Sub divisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment²⁷ With such powerful and obvious motives to Union,²⁸ affecting all parts of our country,²⁹ while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason,³⁰ to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.³¹

In contemplating the causes wch. may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern, that³² any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by *Geographical* discriminations: *Northern* and *Southern*; *Atlantic* and *Western* ; whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views.³³ One of the expedients of Party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other Districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from

24. The word "any" is crossed out.

25. The word "they" is crossed out.

26. The words "'Tis natural" are crossed out.

27. The words "It may not impossibly be found, that the spirit of party, the machinations of foreign powers, the corruption and ambition of individual citizens, are more formidable adversaries to the unity of our Empire, than any inherent difficulties in the scheme. Against these, the mounds of national opinion, national sympathy and national jealousy ought to be raised" are crossed out.

28. The word "as" is crossed out.

29. The word "have" is crossed out.

30. The words "cause in the fact itself" are crossed out.

31. The words "Besides the more serious causes already hinted as threatening our Union, there is one less dangerous, but sufficiently dangerous to make it prudent to be upon our guard against it. I allude to the petulance of party differences of opinion. It is not uncommon to hear the irritations which these excite vent themselves in declarations, that the different parts of the United States are ill affected to each other in menaces, that the Union will be dissolved by this or that measure. Intimations like these are as indiscreet as they are intemperate. Though frequently made with levity, and without any really evil intention, they have a tendency to produce the consequences which they indicate. They teach the minds of men to consider the Union as precarious—as an object to which they ought not to attach their hopes and fortunes, and thus chill the sentiment in its favor. By alarming the pride of those to whom they are addressed, they set ingenuity at work to depreciate the value of the thing and to discover reasons of indifference towards it. This is not wise. It will be much wiser to habituate ourselves to reverence the Union as the palladium of our national happiness—to accommodate constantly our words and actions to that idea, and to discountenance whatever may suggest a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned." are crossed out. Washington has bracketed this paragraph in the margin and noted it as "not important enough."

32. The words "our parties for some time past have been too much characterized by" are crossed out.

33. The words "These discriminations, the mere contrivance of the spirit of Party, (always dexterous to seize every handle by which the passions can be wielded, and too skilful not to turn to account the sympathy of neighborhood), have furnished an argument against the Union, as evidence of a real difference of local interests and views, and serve to hazard it, by organizing larger districts of country under the leaders of contending factions, whose rivalships, prejudices and schemes of ambition, rather than the true Interest of the Country, will direct the use of their influence. If it be possible to correct this poison in the habit of our body politic, it is worthy the endeavors of the moderate and the good to effect it." are crossed out.

these misrepresentations. They tend to render Alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The Inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful

lesson on this³⁴ head. They have seen, in the Negociation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the Treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event, throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their Interests in regard to the Mississippi . They have been witnesses to the formation of two Treaties, that with G: Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our Foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of [*sic*] these advantages on the UNION by wch. they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their Brethren and connect them with Aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of Your Union, a Government for the whole is indispensable. No Alliances however strict between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all Alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a Constitution of Government, better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in

34. The word "subject" is crossed out.

its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its Laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their Constitutions of Government. But the Constitution which at any time exists, 'till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole People, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the People to establish Government presupposes the duty of every Individual to obey the established Government.

All obstructions to the execution of the Laws, all combinations and Associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, controul counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the Constituted authorities are destructive of this fundamental principle and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the Nation, the will of a party; often a small but artful and enterprizing minority of the Community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different

parties, to make the public administration the Mirror of the ill concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or Associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends,³⁵ they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the Power of the People, and to usurp for themselves the reins of Government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles however specious the pretexts. one method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of Governments, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard, by which to test the real tendency of the existing Constitution of a country; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypotheses and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypotheses and opinion: and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a Government of as much vigour as is consistent with the perfect security of Liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such

35. The words "and purposes" are crossed out.

a Government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest Guardian. It is indeed little else than a name, where the Government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the Society within the limits prescribed by the laws and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.³⁶

I have already intimated to you the danger of Parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on Geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the Spirit of Party, generally

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from³⁷ our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human Mind. It exists under different shapes in all Governments, more or less stifled,

controuled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly their worst enemy.³⁸

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissention, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an Individual: and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction more able or more fortunate than his competitors,

36. The words "Owing to you as I do a frank and free disclosure of my heart, I shall not conceal from you the belief I entertain, that your Government as at present constituted is far more likely to prove too feeble than too powerful." are crossed out.

37. The word "human" is crossed out.

38. The words "In Republics of narrow extent, it is not difficult for those who at any time hold the reins of Power, and command the ordinary public favor, to overturn the established order [Constitution,] in favor of their own aggrandizement. The same thing may likewise be too often accomplished in such Republics, by partial combinations of men, who though not in office, from birth, riches or other sources of distinction, have extraordinary influence and numerous retainers [adherents.] By debauching the military force, by surprising some commanding citadel, or by some other sudden and unforeseen movement, the fate of file Republic is decided. But in Republics of large extent, usurpation can scarcely make its way through these avenues. The powers and opportunities of resistance of a wide extended and numerous nation, defy the successful efforts of the ordinary military force, or of any collections which wealth and patronage may call to their aid. In such Republics, it is safe to assert, that the conflicts of popular factions are the chief, if not the only inlets, of usurpation and Tyranny." are crossed out. The words in brackets were inserted as afterthoughts.

turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of Party are sufficient to make it the interest and the duty of a wise People to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the Public Councils and enfeeble the Public administration. It agitates the Community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against

another, foments occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access³⁹ to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy⁴⁰ and and [sic] the will of one country, are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the Administration of the Government and serve to keep alive the spirit of Liberty. This within certain limits is probably true, and in Governments of a Monarchical cast Patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with layout, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest⁴¹ instead of warming it should consume.

39. The words "through the channels of party passions. It frequently subjects the policy of our own country to" are crossed out.

40. The words "of some foreign country, and even enslaves the will of our Government to the will of some foreign Government." are crossed out.

41. The words "it should not only warm but" are crossed out.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free Country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective Constitutional spheres; avoiding in the exercise of the Powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create⁴² whatever the form of government, a real⁴³ despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and⁴⁴ proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power; by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the Guardian of the Public Weal⁴⁵ against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the People, the distribution or modification of the Constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one

instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the⁴⁶ customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent⁴⁷ must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or⁴⁸ transient benefit which the use⁴⁹ can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that

42. The word "under" is crossed out.

43. The words "form a" are crossed out.

44. The word "the" is crossed out.

45. The word "from" is crossed out.

46. The words "usual and natural" are crossed out.

47. The words "of its use" are crossed out.

48. The word "temporary" is crossed out.

49. The word "itself" is crossed out.

man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and citizens. The mere Politician, equally with the pious man ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free Government. Who that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric⁵⁰

Promote then as an object of primary importance, Institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as⁵¹ sparingly as possible: avoiding occasions of expence by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently

50. The words "Cultivate industry and frugality. as auxiliaries to good morals and sources of private and public prosperity. Is there no room to regret that our propensity to expence exceeds our means for it? Is there not more luxury among us, and more diffusively, than suits the actual stage of our national progress? Whatever may be the apology for luxury in a country, mature in the arts which are its ministers, and the cause of national opulence. Can it promote the advantage of a young country, almost wholly agricultural, in the infancy of the arts, and certainly not in the maturity of wealth?" are crossed out. Washington has bracketed them in the margin, with the note "not sufficiently important."

51. The word "little" is crossed out.

prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by⁵² shunning occasions of expence, but by vigorous exertions in time of Peace to discharge the Debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your Representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should⁵³ cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue; that to have Revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseperable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the Conduct of the Government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining Revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towds. all Nations.⁵⁴ Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great Nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a People always guided by an exalted justice and

benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages wch. might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be,

52. The word "avoiding" is crossed out.

53. The word "coincide" is crossed out.

54. the words "and cultivate peace and harmony with all, for in Public, as well as in private transactions, I am persuaded that honesty will always be found to be the best policy." are crossed out.

that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a Nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human Nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that⁵⁵ permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular Nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded; and that in place of them just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The Nation, which indulges towards another⁵⁶ an habitual hatred,⁵⁶ or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one Nation against another,⁵⁷ disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate envenomed and bloody contests. The Nation, prompted by illwill and resentment sometimes impels to War the Government, contrary to⁵⁸ the best calculations of policy. The Government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the Nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the Liberty, of Nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one Nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illusion of an

55. The word "rooted" is crossed out.

56. The article "a" is crossed out.

57. The words “begets of course a similar sentiment in that other” are crossed out.

58. The words “its own” are crossed out.

imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one⁵⁹ the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and Wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification: It leads also to concessions to the favourite Nation of priviledges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions;⁶⁰ by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained;⁶¹ and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom eql. priviledges are withheld: And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favourite Nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition corruption or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent Patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public Councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful Nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, (I conjure you to believe me⁶² fellow citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be⁶³ *constantly* awake;

59. The word “another” is crossed out.

60. The figure “1st” is crossed out.

61. The abbreviation “dly” is crossed out and the figure 2 converted into the ampersand.

62. The words “my fr'ds” are crossed out.

63. Washington first wrote the word “incessantly” and then crossed out “in” and erased the rest; he then converted it into the word “constantly.”

since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of Republican Government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real Patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The Great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign Nations is in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements let them be fulfilled, with⁶⁴ perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by⁶⁵ artificial⁶⁶ ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or⁶⁷ the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities:

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one People, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon⁶⁸ to be scrupulously respected; when⁶⁹ belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly

64. The words "circumspection indeed, but with" are crossed out.

65. The article "an" is crossed out.

66. The word "connection" is crossed out.

67. The word "in" is crossed out.

68. The words "to observe" are crossed out.

69. The words "neither of two" are crossed out.

hazard the giving us provocation;⁷⁰ when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by our justice shall Counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European Ambition, Rivalship, Interest, Humour or Caprice?

'Tis our true policy to steer clear of⁷¹ permanent Alliances, with any portion of the foreign world. So far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it, for let me not be understood as capable of patronising infidelity to⁷² existing engagements⁷³ (I hold⁷⁴ the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy).⁷⁵ I repeat it therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectably defensive posture, we may safely trust to⁷⁶ temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all Nations, are recommended by policy, humanity and interest. But even our Commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand: neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and deversifying by gentle means the streams of Commerce, but forcing nothing, establishing with Powers so disposed; in order to give to trade a stable course, to define the rights of our Merchants, and

70. The words "to throw our weight into the opposite scale" are crossed out.

71. The words "intimate connections" are crossed out.

72. The prefix "pre" is crossed out.

73. The word "for" is crossed out.

74. The words "it to be true in public, as in private transactions," are crossed out.

75. The words "those must" are crossed out.

76. The word "occasional" is crossed out.

to enable the Government to support them; conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that 'tis folly in one Nation to look for disinterested favors⁷⁷ from another; that it must pay with a portion of its Independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from Nation to Nation. 'Tis an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my Countrymen these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression, I could wish; that they will controul the usual current of the passions, or prevent our Nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the Destiny of Nations: But if I may even flatter myself, that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign Intrigue, to guard against the Impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompence for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my Official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have

77. The word "at" is crossed out.

been delineated, the public Records and other evidences of my conduct must Witness to You and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.'

In relation to the still subsisting War in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d. of April 1793 is the index to my Plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of Your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me; uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain⁷⁸ I was well satisfied that our Country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and

interest, to take a Neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance and firmness.⁷⁹

The considerations, which respect the right to hold this conduct,⁸⁰ it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers has been virtually admitted by all.⁸¹

The duty of holding a Neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every Nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of Peace and amity towards other Nations.

78. The words "(and from men disagreeing in their impressions of the origin progress and nature of that war)" are crossed out.

79. The words "The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, some of them of a delicate nature would be improperly the subject of explanation of this occasion. I will barely observe that according to my understanding of the matter, that right so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers, has been virtually admitted by all." are crossed out. A second attempt to express the same thought was also discarded by the device of wafering the slip of paper on which is recorded the version finally decided upon. The second discarded attempt reads; "The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, would be improperly the subject of particular discussion on this occasion. I will barely observe, that to me they appear warranted by well established principles of the Laws of Nations, as applicable to the nature of our alliance with France in connection with the circumstances of the War and the relative situations of the contracting parties."

80. The words "some of them of a delicate nature, would be improperly the subject of explanation" are crossed out.

81. This paragraph is bounded by a marginal brace, in which Washington has written "This is the first draught and it is questionable which of the two is to be preferred." This marginalia was, afterwards, crossed out.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption, to that degree

of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my Administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors.⁸² Whatever they may be I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate⁸³ the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my Country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty five years of my life dedicated to its Service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the Mansions of rest.⁸⁴

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a Man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for⁸⁵ several Generations; I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow Citizens, the benign influence of good Laws under a free Government, the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.⁸⁶

82. The words "I deprecate the evils to which they may tend, and" are crossed out.

83. The word "them" is crossed out.

84. The following words are here crossed out: "May I, without the charge of ostentation, add, that neither ambition nor interest has been the impelling cause of my actions; that I have never designedly misused any power confided to me, nor hesitated to use one, where I thought it could redound to your benefit? May I, without the appearance of affectation, say that the fortune with which I came into office is not bettered otherwise than by that improvement in the value of property, which the quick progress and uncommon prosperity of our country have produced? May I stall further add, without breach of delicacy, that I shall retire without cause for a blush, with sentiment alien to the fervor of those vows for the happiness of his country so natural to a citizen who sees in it the native soil of his progenitors and himself for four generations." In a marginal brace, also crossed out, are the following words: "This paragraph may have the appearance of self distrust and mere vanity."

85. The word "four" is crossed out.

86. The original, in the New York Public Library (from a facsimile of which this text is printed), is dated by Washington September 19.

On September 19 Washington left Philadelphia for Mount Vernon.

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, September 18, 1796.

Gentlemen: More than once, the Spanish Minister expressed, with pleasing solicitude, the intentions of his Government to erect in the Federal City a suitable Building for the accommodation of its Representative, near the Government of the United States; provided a convenient and agreeable Site could be obtained for the purpose. I always answered that this measure would be very pleasing and agreeable to me; and that I was sure the Commissioners of the Federal City would feel happy in accommodating him with ground for these Buildings.

But on Tuesday last he told me, that application had been made to you through, or by Mr. Barry,⁸² and difficulties (which he was not able to explain to me) had occurred. I hope they can be removed, for in my opinion a precedent of this sort may influence other foreign Governments to follow the example, which would, I conceive, contribute much more to the advancement of the City than any pecuniary consideration to be derived from the Sale of the Lots.

I shall not dwell however on the subject in this letter, as I expect in eight or ten days to be in the City, and will renew the matter then. With very great esteem etc.⁸³

82. James Barry.

83. From a copy in the writing of George Washington Craik in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Mount Vernon, October 5, 1796.

Gentlemen: The bad weather (rather rain) on Monday, prevented my sending to the Post Office as usual, that afternoon,. of course it retarded your receipt of the enclosed request of the Trustees.

I will give the several matters contained in your letters of the first instant due consideration,⁹³ and inform you of the result as I pass through the City, on my return to Philadelphia, wch. I expect will be on, or about the 25th.

If this delay will involve inconveniences, let me be informed thereof, and I will endeavour to give it to you sooner. With great esteem etc.⁹⁴

93. See Washington's letter to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, Oct. 1796, *post*.

94. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, October 21, 1796.

Gentlemen: According to my promise, I have given the several matters contained in your letter of the first instant, the best consideration I am able.

The following is the result: subject however to alterations, if, upon fuller investigation, and the discussion I mean to have with you on these topicks on my way to Philadelphia, I should find cause therefor.

Had not those obstacles opposed themselves to it, which are enumerated by one of the Commissioners, I should, (for reasons, which are now unnecessary to assign) have given a decided preference to the Site which was first had in contemplation for a University in the Federal City; but as these obstacles appear to be insurmountable, the next best site for this purpose, in my opinion, is the square surrounded by numbers 21, 22, 34, 45, 60 a[nd] 63.⁹ and I decide in favor of it accordingly.

Conceiving (if there be space sufficient to afford it) that a Botanical Garden would be a good appendage to the Institution of a University, part of this square might be applied to that purpose: If inadequate, and that Square designated in the Plan of Majr. L'Enfant for a Marine Hospital, is

susceptible of *that* Institution, and a Botanical Garden also, ground *there* might be appropriated to this use. If neither will admit of it, I see no solid objection against commencing this Work within the President's square; it being previously understood that, it is not to be occupied, for this purpose, beyond a certain period; or until circumstances would enable, or induce the Public, to improve it into pleasure Walks, &ca. &ca.

9. This would be the area between the mouth of Rock and Tiber Creeks, bounded by 26th Street on the west, E Street on the north, 22d Street on the east, and the river front on the south.

Although I have no hesitation in giving it as my opinion, that all the Squares (except those of the Capitol and President's) designated for public purposes, are subject to such appropriations as will best accommodate its views, yet it is, and always has been my belief, that it would impair the confidence which ought to be had in the Public, to convert them to private uses, or to dispose of them (otherwise than temporarily) to individuals. The Plan which has been exhibited to, and dispersed through all parts of the World, give strong indications of a different design; and an innovation, in one instance, would lay the foundation for applications in many; and produce consequences which cannot be foreseen, nor perhaps easily remedied. My doubts [therefore] with respect to designating the Square on the Eastern Branch for a Marine Hospital, did not proceed from an idea that it might be converted, advantageously, into Saleable Lots; but from the utility of having an Hospital in the City at all. Finding however, that it is usual in other Countries to have them there, the practice, it is to be presumed, is founded in convenience; and as it might be difficult to procure a Site *without* the City, that would answer the purpose, I confirm the original idea of placing it where it is marked, in L'Enfant's plan.

I am disposed to believe, if foreign States are inclined to erect buildings for their Representatives near the United States, the Sites for these buildings had better be left to the choice of their respective Ministers: for besides the reasons which have been already adduced, against innovations, it is very questionable whether ground as low as that in the Capitol Square, west of the building, would be their choice: to fix them there then might be the means of defeating the object altogether.

As the business of the Executive

Officers will be chiefly, if not altogether with the President, Sites for their Offices ought to be convenient to his residence; but, as the identical spots can be better chosen on the ground with the plan of the City before one, than by the latter alone, I will postpone this decision until my arrival therein; as I shall also do other appropriations of public Squares, if it be necessary to take the matter up before my return to Philadelphia.

It might be well to amplify on those subjects which you conceive ought to be laid before Congress, or the national Council, and to suggest the mode which you may have contemplated as best for the purpose, against my arrival; which, probably, will be on Tuesday or Wednesday next. With great esteem etc.¹⁰

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, November 7, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your two letters, dated the 31st. Ult., with their several enclosures, were received on thursday last. The one to Mr. Wolcott has been delivered to him; but he seems to have no sanguine expectation of obtaining a loan from the Bank of the United States, for the purposes of the Federal City. He intended to communicate your offer to the President and Directors on Saturday and to support it with an expression of his wishes that you might be accommodated. He promised to write to you himself, by this day's Post, but did not expect he should be able to give the result of his application at that time.

10. The draft, in the writing of George Washington Craik, is in the *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress. The word in brackets is in the writing of Washington.

On October 25 Washington wrote to the Secretary of State(?), sending a letter from the sister of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, to be forwarded to him. "I shall commence my journey for Philadelphia this afternoon; but business will detain me one day at least in the Federal City?" This letter is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

I gave him your letter for Messrs. Willink, to be forwarded to those Gentlemen, and shewed him the copy of it, as I had some doubt myself with respect to the oiler of 7½ pr. Ct. *pr. annum*. His doubts of the eligibility of *this* offer, under the Act of Congress guaranteeing the Loan, being still greater than mine, I requested he would give the matter mature consideration, and inform you of the result, if in his judgment it was inadmissable under the Act. You will observe that the objection lyes to the words *pr. annum*, not because the cost and charges in obtaining the Loan may amount to this in the *first* instance. As Mr. Wolcott (if he is confirmed in this opinion) will write to you himself on this subject, I shall not enlarge. except to inform you that I shall detain the Letter until this point is decided.

My opinion always has been (since the first Sale to Greenleaf) and still is, oppos'd to large Sales of lots, except in the denier resort. I am more disposed therefore to try any other expedient to

raise money in preference. If these fail, and it comes to the alternative of selling in the manner you propose, or suspending the operations altogether I shall have no hesitation in my choice of the first. I have no doubt of your being informed of the result of Mr. Wolcotts application *here*, by Wednesday's Mail (if he says nothing thereon today). If this fails, I will execute and forward the power authorising the other application to the Legislature of Maryland, by the succeeding Post.

Enclosed is a statement handed to me by the Proprietors of the Hotel in the Federal City. I told the bearer (one of them) who brought it to me that I would, simply, transmit it. If your answer passes through me, to them, let it be distinct from other matters, and

so framed as that the letter may be turned over to them, under a blank cover. With great Esteem
etc.²⁰

***To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

(Private)

Philadelphia, November 14, 1796.

Dear Sir: This letter is for your eye only. It is written for the purpose of expressing my regret for your continued absence from the Seat of Government. Rely upon it, it is productive of unpleasant remarks, in which I must be involved. It will, indeed is, considered as making a Sinecure of the Office. To suppose there is no particular occasion for the Law Officer of the government at the Seat of it during the recess of Congress is incorrect; many cases have presented themselves since the adjournment, requiring the opinion and advice of the Attorney General (besides other duties marked out by the Laws).

20. From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

The letter sent, in the writing of George Washington Craik, is in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

Some points have called for your aid since I have been here, and will occur without an hours previous notice in times like the present. Let me entreat you therefore to come on without delay, and to be assured of the esteem and friendship of Your Affect.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, November 21, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 11th. Instant has been duly received. The altered One to Messrs. Wilhem, and Jan Willink has been forwarded to its address, and the former is herewith returned.

Your application to the Bank of the United States for the loan of money, having failed (as I presume the Secretary of the Treasury has informed you, and as I have always supposed would be the case) I have executed the Power which was sent to me authorising a similar application to the Legislature of Maryland. and hope, if made, that it will be attended with better success.³⁹ I advise the retention of it however, a few days, until you hear from Mr. Wolcott the result of his soundings of a Mr. Hope (of the House of Hope, late of Amsterdam) who is just arrived in this City; and of whom it is *supposed* money might be obtained. With great esteem etc.⁴⁰

39. A copy of the authority to borrow \$150,000 from the State of Maryland, dated Nov. 21, 1796, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers in* the Library of Congress.

40. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

***To JUDITH SARGENT STEVENS MURRAY⁴¹**

Philadelphia, November 24, 1796.

Madam: The letter with which you were pleased to honor me, dated the 5th. instant, came duly to hand; and is entitled to my grateful acknowledgements for the favourable sentiments your partiality has led you to express for me; and for the services I have endeavoured to render our common country.

I wish both were more deserving of the eulogium you have bestowed thereon.

Mrs. Washington adds her name to mine as a subscriber to your works, and with Miss Custis (who is with us) unites in best wishes for the success of it, and for your personal happiness, with Madam Your etc.

PS. Enclosed is a five Dollar Bank note on acct. of the subscription.⁴²

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, November 27, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 21st instant. with its enclosures, came duly to hand; previous to which, I had dispatched the Power, authorising an application to the Legislature of Maryland, for the loan of money; accompanying it, however, with a request that, it might not be carried into operation until you should have learnt the result of an application contemplated to be made by the Secretary of the Treasury to a Mr. Hope of Amsterdam. This application has been made; the result was to be known today; and by the Mail of tomorrow

41. She calls herself, in her letter of November 5, "the sister of Colonel Sargent."

42. The subscription was, probably, for *The Gleaner*, which was published in Boston in February, 1798.

you are to be informed thereof, So says Mr. Wolcott to me.

The Memorial, relative to the Establishment of a University in the Federal City, I shall retain until the meeting of Congress, and then dispose of it as circumstances may dictate.⁴⁴

The dissensions, and controversies which so frequently happen in that City, are extremely to be regretted; and nothing, I am persuaded, will contribute more to appease them, and to remove the jealousies which, without, will forever exist, than the residence of the Commissioners within the City; for which reason I do, in behalf of the public, give it as my decided opinion that they ought, and as my expectation that they will, remove into it, before the building operations of the ensuing year commences. It would, I conceive, be submitting to a novel doctrine, to have the Commissioners of *any* City non-residents thereof. How much greater then must it be in one, where there are such a variety of objects to attend to? and such incessant calls upon their activity?

I am persuaded, that upon due consideration of the decisive opinion (only the repetition of a former one) now given, you will equally with others, see the propriety of enforcing it, as well for the purpose of answering the public expectation, and causing jealousies to subside, as from the intrinsic benefits which must result from the measure, in many points of view.

Mr. Walkers⁴⁵ attack; appears to me to be as impolitic, as it is indecent and intemperate; but as the issue of Indictments (as far as my observations have gone) has not often answered the ends of the prosecution, I thought it expedient to require the

44. This memorial from the Commissioners of the District of Columbia was submitted to Congress December 12 by James Madison.

45. George Walker. He was a Philadelphia merchant who speculated in land purchases in the city of Washington.

opinion of the Attorney General of the United States on the question you propounded to me; enclosed is the copy of it. Having done so, I submit the course to be pursued to your own judgments. To prosecute in *this* City, if Mr. Walker has become a Resident of it, would, I presume, be duly considered before it is undertaken. With very great esteem etc.⁴⁶

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, December 1, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 25th Ultimo came to hand on tuesday last, but it was not in my power to give it an earlier acknowledgment: and now, I must do it without resorting to papers (to be perfectly correct). The pressure of my business with the different Departments, previous to the meeting of Congress; and my own preparation for that event, leaves me but little time to attend to other matters.

The discontents with which you are assailed by one or other of the Proprietors in the Federal City must, unquestionably, be very disagreeable and troublesome to you, for they are extremely irksome to me.

In the case however before us, I conceive Mr. Covachichi might have received a definitive answer, without refering the matter to the Executive. On what part of the Contract with Greenleaf he has

founded an opinion that a site was designated for a University, and has built his complaints, or how it came to pass that any allusion to

46. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

such a measure should have found its way into that Contract, I have no more recollection than I have a conception, of what could have induced it; for your Clerk has omitted sending the Extract.

It is a well known fact, or to say the least, it has been always understood by me, that the establishment of a University in the Federal City depended upon several contingencies; one of which, and a material one too, was donations for the purpose. Until lately, this business could scarcely be said to have advanced beyond the *wishes* of its advocates, although these wishes were accompanied, generally, with expressions of what might be expected; and whenever the names of Mr. Blodget, and the proprietors of that vicinity, were mentioned in relation to this business, the idea (expressed or implied) always was, that they meant to give the ground.

Is this the intention of Mr. Covachichi relative to the object he is now contending for? if it is, and a sufficient space of ground, on these terms, can be obtained there for this purpose, without interfering with the property of Orphans, my opinion is, that the University ought to be placed there. But, if this is *not* the design, can that Gentleman, or any other expect that the public will buy (for an exchange is a purchase, and may be of the most troublesome kind) when it has unappropriated ground nearly as convenient? and why do this? because a site has been loosely talked of? because a proprietor, to enhance the sale of his property has coloured the advantages of it as highly as he could? or because the purchaser, omitting to investigate matters beforehand, wants the public to encounter an expence, it is unable to bear, by

way of redress for his own in, caution? What would have been the answer of the Commissioners if he had previously applied to them, to know if a University would be placed where he is now contending for? Certainly, that he ought not to calculate upon it. If that would have been the answer then (and unless there are facts which have escaped my recollection) I can conceive no other could have been given, it is not inapplicable at present.

A University was not even contemplated by Majr. L'Enfant in the plan of the City which was laid before Congress; taking its origin from another source. This plan you shall receive by the first safe hand who may be going to the Federal City. By it you may discover (tho' almost obliterated) the directions given to the Engraver, by Mr. Jefferson, with a pencil, what parts to omit. The principle on which it was done, I have communicated to you on more occasions than one. With esteem &c.

PS. Since writing the foregoing, I have received the extract, omitted to be enclosed in your letter of the 25th. ulto.

I do not recollect ever to have seen, or heard of it before. Nor do I see any cause to change my opinion since I have done so, unless upon the Condition which is mentioned in the body of this letter. that is, receiving the ground for the proposed Site, as a donation.⁵⁹

59. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

***To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY**

Philadelphia, December 5, 1796.

My dear Sir: Not being able to recollect with certainty, whether I expressed to you my ardent desire that no favourable occasion might be omitted, by you, of signifying how much it was my wish, and the wishes of the People of this country, that that friend to it, Mr. de la Fayette, could be liberated from his confinement, is the cause of my giving you the trouble of this address.

Not in my public character have I conceived myself authorised to move in this business; but in my private one I have used, and shall continue to use, every exertion in my power to effect this much desired object. For surely if a hard fate has attended any one, the fortunes of this Gentleman has met it.

It would give me much pleasure to hear of your safe arrival after an agreeable passage; and that your reception from the French Directory has been favourable. Of politics, or on matters of public concern, I shall say nothing; because you are too recently from this country to need information on the first subject, and from the Office of State you receive all that can be given on the second. In presenting compliments to Mrs. and Miss Pinckney, Mrs. Washington unites hers along with those of My dear Sir etc.

To GOVERNOR JOHN HAWKINS STONE

Philadelphia, December 7, 1796.

Sir: The attempts lately made by the Commissioners of the City of Washington to borrow Money in Europe for the purpose of carrying on the public buildings having failed or been retarded they have been authorised by me to apply to your State for a loan of One hundred and fifty thousand Dollars upon terms which they will communicate. Such is the present situation of foreign Nations with respect to Money, that according to the best information there is no reasonable hope of obtaining a loan in any of them immediately and applications can now only be made in the United States upon this subject with any prospect of success and perhaps no where with greater propriety than to the Legislature of Maryland where it must be presumed the most anxious solicitude is felt for the growth and prosperity of that City which is intended for the permanent Seat of Government in America.

If the State has it in its power to lend the money which is solicited, I persuade myself it will be done, and the more especially at this time when a loan is so indispensable that without it not only very great and many impediments must be endured in the prosecution of the Work now in hand, but inevitable loss must be sustained by the funds of the City, in consequence of premature Sales of the public property. I have thought I ought not to omit to State for the information of the General Assembly, as well the difficulty of obtaining Money on loan, as the present necessity for it, which I must request the favor of you most respectfully

to communicate. With very great respect etc.⁶²

[MD.H.S.]

To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Philadelphia, December 7, 1796.

Sir: Taking into consideration the critical situation of the funds of the Commissioners, I have, though with much reluctance, written a letter to the Governor of Maryland (agreeably to the request of the Commissioners) to be laid before the assembly of that state. The letter is enclosed herewith. And left unsealed for your perusal; after which you will please to seal and deliver or have it delivered to the Governor. I am etc.⁶³

62. In the writing of George Washington Craik. The draft, in the writing of Charles Lee, with two changes by Washington, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

63. The draft, in the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

***To ALEXANDER WHITE**

Philadelphia, December 26, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 15th instr. was not received until friday last, too late for the Post of that day, of course the receipt of it could not meet an earlier acknowledgment than by the Mail of this mornng.

I wish Mrs. White's determination had been otherwise than is announced in your letter; but if I understand the expression of it, as it respects yourself, I do not see what more the Public could reasonably require of you, than you are disposed to give, when after saying this determination must occasion your resignation you add, "unless my personal attendance may be considered as sufficient," and then subjoin, "My court business is so far disposed of, and I shall make such arrangements with respect to my property, that I have no doubt of being able to perform my full share of the duties of the office, if under existing circumstances, the residence of my family *ought* to be dispensed with."

However desirable on your account, and wished by others, that Mrs. White could have reconciled it to her inclination to have become a resident in the federal City, yet, tho' her not doing it is to be regretted, I am well disposed to accept the continuance of your services upon the terms I understand they are offered, the residence there yourself. It never was expected that a Commissioner should never be absent from his Post, though presumed always that such absence would be so timed as to produce no dereliction of, or inconvenience to, the public concerns which are entrusted to their management; and while there are three in Commission (if harmony prevails) matters may, certainly, be so arranged as

to avoid these, as well as the unpleasant animadversions which otherwise might attach themselves.

I am perfectly satisfied that your own sense of propriety, will never suffer you to neglect any trust you wd. accept, and in that confidence I remain, etc.⁸⁵

***To WILLIAM THORNTON**

Philadelphia, December 26, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 4th. of the present month came to my hands in the usual course of the Post; but a pressure of other matters at that time, prevented my acknowledging the receipt of it at an earlier period.

As you seem sensible of the propriety of the Commissioners residing in the City, with the concerns of which they are intrusted, I have not the smallest doubt of your removing thither as soon as you can be accommodated in the house you have chosen, with the situation of which I am well pleased, as it is in the midst of your operations; and let me give it strongly as my opinion, that *all* the Offices, and *every matter*, and *thing* that relates to the City *ought* to be transacted therein, and the persons to whose care they are committed Residents. Measures of this sort, would form societies in the City, give it eclat, and by increasing the population, contribute not a little to the accommodation of the Members, who compose the Congress; for it is of little signification to prepare a house for that body to *sit in*,

85. From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

unless there are others for their beds and board. the latter of which are more enquired after than the former, by the present Members of Congress, now in this City. I have always thought therefore, that buildings between the Capitol and Presidents house ought to be encouraged as much as possible: and nothing would have a greater tendency towards accomplishing this, than the Commissioners making that part of the City *their* residence, and compelling *all* those who are under their control to do the same, as fast as accommodations can be provided for them there, and around the Capitol. It may be relied on, that the residence in George Town, of those who are entrusted wth. the management of matters in the City is a drawback and a serious evil. Holding the Office of record there, is not a little complained of. These sentiments, although given to you, at this time, as an individual of the board, I wish to have strongly impressed upon that body. With great esteem etc.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.**

Philadelphia, December 26, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letters of the 30th. and 30th. of November and 5th of the present month, are now before me; the receipt of which have, until now, remained unacknowledged.

I have not been unmindful however, of the contents of that, which relates to public property, &ca. in federal City; but, laying it with the two former Powers, and other Papers before the Attorney General of the United States, you will

receive his opinion thereon under cover with this letter. It would have been sent sooner, had I not been desirous of a personal conference with that Gentleman; but which, for ten or twelve days or more, has been prevented by his indisposition, and this still confines him to his chamber.

I shall be ready, while I remain in Office, to execute any Power which you may suggest; the Attorney General approve, and the nature of the case will warrant, for the purpose of designating, and conveying the different descriptions of property therein, and it will lye with the Commissioners to bring these matters forward, as their attention must be more immediately turned to objects of that sort than mine possibly can be.

With respect to the claims of individual proprietors, to be compensated for the spaces occasioned by the intersection of Streets and Avenues, I should conceive that they might, with equal propriety, ask payment for the Streets themselves; but the terms of the original contract, or cession, if a dispute on this point should arise, must be recurred to, for I presume the opinion of the President, in such a case, would avail nothing. But, if angles are taken off, at these spaces, the case is materially altered; and, without designing it, you make a square where none was contemplated, and thereby not only lay the foundation of claim for *those angles* but for the space also which is made a square by that act.

I have never yet met with a single instance, where it has been proposed to depart from the published plan of the City than an inconvenience or dispute of some sort, has not, sooner, or later occurred, for which reason I am persuaded there should be no departure

from it, but in cases of necessity, or very obvious utility.

The Deed is returned. and with very great esteem etc.⁸⁶

***To GUSTAVUS SCOTT**

Philadelphia, December 26, 1796.

Sir: Your favour of the 15th instr. was not received until the 22d. To what the delay is to be ascribed, I know not.

The voice of Maryland, as expressed by its legislature, in the Resolutions which you enclosed, is flattering indeed, as it respects myself, personally; and highly pleasing as it relates to their federal sentiments. I thank you for sendg. them.

From what you have said of the disposition of the Senate, of that State, the presumption is, that the loan of \$100,000 for the use of the Federal City, must, 'ere this, have passed through all the requisite forms. The necessity of the case justified the obtaining of it on almost any terms, and the zeal of the Commissioners (if they, in their individual capacities, which they surely may do without hazarding anything) in making themselves liable for the amount, as it could not be had without, cannot fail of approbation. At the sametime I must confess that the request has a very singular appearance, and will not, I should suppose, be very grateful to the feelings of Congress.

With great esteem etc.⁸⁴

86. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

84. From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

***To THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

(Private)

January 4, 1797.

Dear Sir: As it is very desirable that the papers respecting the discontents of France should be got into Congress, and sent also to Mr. Pinckney as soon as possible; if you mean to give the other Gentleman a perusal of the statement for the latter, it would save time if this was done as you are proceeding towards the close of that Statemt.⁹¹

It is questionable whether the present, and pressing avocations of the other two Secretaries will allow them to go carefully over it; but this, I conceive, does not apply to the Attorney-General.

I have no doubt that you have taken care, and will continue to be assured, of your facts; for as this business will certainly come before the public, not only the facts, but the candour also, the expression,

91. See message to the Senate and the House of Representatives, Jan. 1, 1797, *post*.

and force of every word, will be examined with the most scrutinizing eye, and compared with everything that will admit of a different construction, and if there is the least ground for it, we shall be charged with unfairness, and an intention to impose on, and to mislead the public judgment.

Hence, and from a desire that the statement may be full, fair, calm and argumentative; without asperity, or anything more irritating in the comments, than the narration of facts, which expose unfounded charges and assertions, do themselves produce, I have wished that this letter to Mr. Pinckney may be revised over, and over again. Much depends upon it, as it relates to ourselves, and in the eyes of the world; whatever may be the effect as it respects the governing powers of France. I am etc.

***To DAVID STUART**

Philadelphia, January 8, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 18th Ult. with its enclosures, came to hand in the usual course of the Post; but the pressure of public business has prevented my giving it an acknowledgment until now.

The first thing I shall do after I am settled at Mount Vernon, will be to adjust all my accounts of a private nature; the doing of which, as they ought, has been prevented by public avocations.

What effect Mr. Adets conduct has had, or will have on the public mind, you can form a better opinion of than me. One of the objects which he had in view, (in timing the publication)⁹² is too apparent to require explanation. Some of his own *zealots*,

92. Sparks notes that this was probably the pamphlet which has just been issued in Philadelphia, published by Bache, entitled "Notes adressées par le Citoyen Adet, Ministre Plénipotentiaire de la République Française près les États-Unis d'Amérique, au Secrétaire d'État des États-Unis." A copy is in the Library of Congress.

do not scruple to confess that, he has been too precipitate; and thereby injured the cause he meant to espouse; which is, to establish such an influence in this country as to sway the government, and control its measures. Evidences of this design are abundant, and new proofs are exhibiting themselves every day, to illustrate the fact; and yet, lamentable thought! a large party under real, or pretended fears of British influence, are moving heaven and earth to aid Him in these designs. It is a fact well known, for history proves it, that from the restless temper of the French, and the policy of that nation, they attempt openly, or covertly, by threats or soothing professions, to influence the conduct of most governments. That they have attempted it with us, a little time will shew; but finding a Neutral conduct had been adopted, and would not be relinquished by those who Administered the government, the next step, was to try the people; and to work upon them; several presses, and many Scribblers have been employed to emblazen the improper Acts of the British governmt. and its Officers, and to place them in all the most exaggerated and odious points of view they were susceptible; to complain that there was not only a deficiency of friendship, but a want of justice also in the Executive, towards France, the cause of which, say they, is to be found in a predilection for Great Britain. This not working as well as was expected, from a supposition that there was too much confidence, and perhaps personal regard for the present Chief Magistrate and his politics, the batteries latterly have been levelled at him particularly and personally and although he is soon to become a private citizen, his opinions are to be knocked down, and his character reduced as low as they are

capable of sinking it, even by resorting to absolute falsehoods. As an evidence whereof, and of the plan they are pursuing, I send you a letter from Mr. Paine to me,⁹³ Printed in this City and disseminated with great industry. Others of a similar nature are also in circulation.

To what lengths the French Directory will ultimately go, is difficult to say; but that they have been led to the present point by our own People, I have no doubt. Whether some, who have done this, would choose to accompany them any farther or not, I shall not undertake to decide. But I shall be mistaken if the candid part of my countrymen (although they may be under a French influence) do not see, and acknowledge, that they have imbibed erroneous impressions of the conduct of this government, towards France, when the communication which I promised at the opening of the Session and which will be ready in a few days, comes before the public. It will be seen, if I mistake not also that that country has not such a claim upon our gratitude as has been generally supposed; and that this country has violated no engagement with it; been guilty of no act of injustice towards it; nor have been wanting in friendship, where it could be rendered without departing from that Neutral station we had taken, and resolved to maintain.

Enclosed also, you will receive a production⁹⁴ of Peter Porcupine, alias Wm Cobbet.⁹⁵ Making allowances for the asperity of an Englishman; for some of his strong and coarse expressions; and a want of official information of many facts; it is not a bad thing.

I rejoice much to hear of Mrs. Stuarts restoration to health, and congratulate you, and her on it, and on the birth of a daughter. My best wishes attend her and the family, and with very great regard, etc.

[H.S.P.]

93. The letter, "Printed in this City and disseminated with great industry," was dated July 30, 1796, and published by Bache. It was republished in Dublin and London in 1797. It ended thus: "As to you, sir, treacherous in private friendship (for so you have been to me, and that in the day of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide, whether you are an apostate or an impostor; whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any." No copy of this pamphlet is now found in the *Washington Papers*.

Paine had accepted, effusively, the citizenship and title of citizen of France and was elected to the national convention of that nation. Imprisoned by Robespierre, he, after his release (Sept. 20, 1795), wrote to Washington that "after you were informed of my imprisonment it was incumbent upon you to have made inquiry into the cause...I cannot understand your silence upon that head upon any other ground than as *connivance* at my imprisonment...I was imprisoned on the Ground of being born in England, and your silence in not enquiring into the Cause of that imprisonment and reclaiming me against it was tacitly giving me up. I ought not to have suspected you of Treachery, but...I must continue to think you treacherous till you give me cause to think otherwise." Paine's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

94. Apparently was *A Letter to the Infamous Tom Paine, in Answer to His Letter to George Washington*, published in *Porcupine's Political Censor*, in December, 1796 (Philadelphia).

95. William Cobbett, alias "Peter Porcupine."

***To THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

(Private)

Monday, January 9, 1797.

Dear Sir: Not having seen the conclusion of your Statement for Genl. Pinckney (if completed), and not knowing in what manner you propose to sum it up; it has occurred to me that, closing with some such sentiments as the following, might not be improper.

That the conduct of the United States towards France has been, as will appear by the foregoing statement, regulated by the strictest principles of Neutrality.

That there has been no attempt in the government, to violate our Treaty with that country. To weaken our engagements therewith. Or to withhold any friendship we could render consistent with the Neutrality we had adopted.

That Peace has been our primary object, but so far has it been from inducing us to acquiesce in silence to the capturing of our Vessels; impressing our Seamen; or to the misconduct of the Naval, or other Officers of the British government, no instance can be produced of authenticated facts having passed unnoticed; and where occasion required it, without strong remonstrances.

That this government seeing no propriety in the measure, nor conceiving itself to be under any obligation to communicate to the Ministers of the French Republic all the unpleasant details of what had passed between it and the British Minister here, or with the Minister for foreign affairs at the Court of London on these accounts; conscious of its fair dealing towards all the Belligerent Powers; and wrapt up in its own integrity; it little expected (under the

circumstances which have been enumerated) the upbraidings it has met with. Notwithstanding, it now is, as it always has been, the earnest wish of the government (and you cannot too strongly enforce it) to be on the best and most friendly footing with the Republic of France; and we have no doubt, after giving this candid exposition of facts, that the Directory will revoke the orders under which our Trade is suffering, and will pay the damages it has sustained thereby. Yours sincerely.

***To BENJAMIN WALKER**

Philadelphia, January 12, 1797.

Dear Walker: Permit me once more to give you the trouble of forwarding the enclosed letters to their respective addresses. If you read the *Aurora* of this City, or those Gazettes which are under the same influence, you cannot but have perceived with what malignant industry, and persevering falsehoods I am assailed, in order to weaken, if not destroy, the confidence of the Public.

Amongst other attempts to effect this purpose, spurious letters, known at the time of their first publication (I believe in the year 1777) to be forgeries, to answer a similar purpose in the Revolution, are, or extracts from them, brought forward with the highest emblazoning of which they are susceptible, with a view to attach principles to me which every action of my life have given the lie to. But *that* is no stumbling block with the Editors of these Papers and their supporters. And now, *perceiving* a disinclination on my part, perhaps *knowing* , that

I had determined not to take notice of such attacks, they are pressing this matter upon the public mind with more avidity than usual; urging, that my silence, is a proof of their genuineness.

Although I never wrote, or ever saw one of these letters until they issued from New York, in Print;⁹⁸ yet the Author of them must have been tolerably well acquainted in, or with some person of my family, to have given the names, and some circumstances which are grouped in the mass, of erroneous details. But of all the mistakes which have been committed in this business, none is more palpable, or susceptible of detection than the manner in which it is said they were obtained, by the capture of my Mulatto Billy, with a Portmanteau. *All the Army* , under my immediate command, could contradict this; and I believe most of them know, that no Attendant of mine, or a particle of my baggage ever fell into the hands of the enemy during the whole course of the War.

It would be a singular satisfaction to me to learn, who was the Author of these letters; and from what source they originated.⁹⁹ No person in this country can, I conceive, give this information but Mr. Rivington: If, therefore, you are upon terms of familiarity with that Gentleman, and see no impropriety in hinting this desire to him, it would oblige me. He may comply to what extent his own judgment shall dictate, and I pledge my honor that, nothing to his disadvantage, or the disadvantage of any of the Actors at that time, shall result from it.

I offer the compliments of the Season, and you will do me the justice to believe they are warmer than the weather, to

98. This new edition of the spurious letters first published in America by James Rivington in New York, 1778, from the London publication of J. Bew, made its appearance in 1796 under the following title: *Epistles domestic, confidential, and official, from General Washington, written about the commencement of the American contest, when he entered on the command of the Army of the United States...New York: Printed by G. Robinson...and J Bull and sold by James Rivington...* MDCCXCVI. Many genuine papers were incorporated in this 1796 publication, along with the forged letters published

in 1778. (See Washington's letter to Lund Washington, June 12, 1776, in vol. 5, p. 126, and footnote thereto.)

99. So far as is known this "singular satisfaction" was denied Washington, although William Carmichael knew of the source as early as 1777. According to the *Deane Papers* (New York Historical Society), vol. 2, p. 75, Carmichael wrote on June 20 of that year from Paris to C. W. F. Dumas that it was "A junto of refugees from various parts of the continent, who meet daily in Pall Mall, London, to do this dirty work of government to earn the pittance but scantily afforded to each of them. At the head of this junto were [Thomas] Hutchinson, [Rev. Myles] Cooper, [John] Chandler, [John] Vassel, and others who would not be named but for their infamy. They have forged letters lately under the name of Gen. Washington, which the good, silly souls of Europe will swallow as genuine, unless contradicted in different gazettes."

Mrs. Walker and yourself, of whose health and happiness we shall always be glad to hear. I am &c.

***To GEORGE WALKER**

Philadelphia, January 26, 1797.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th instt. was received this day. It was not, I conceive, the intention of the Law which established the seat of the general government, that the President of the United States should enter into the detail of the business for the execution of which Commissioners were appointed. But it certainly is his duty, when charges of Malpractice, or improper conduct are exhibited against them, to cause the charges to be fairly examined. This I shall do; in the first instance, by transmitting a copy of your letter, that they may severally know, of what they are accused; that, from the answers I shall receive, ulterior measures

may be decided on.

This is the line of conduct I have always pursued. For, as I never, on the one hand, suffer in formation unfavourable to the character, or conduct of public Officers (who are amenable to the Executive) to pass unnoticed; so, on the other, from motives of delicacy as well as justice, I have conceived it proper to hear, always, what they have to say in their justification before a more formal investigation takes place.

With respect to the residence of the Commissioners in the City, they are perfectly well informed of the sentiments of the Executive on that head; and it is not to be doubted that they will conform thereto. With sincere thanks for yr. good wishes, I am etc.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, January 29, 1797.

Gentlemen: Having received a letter from Mr. George Walker, of which a copy is enclosed, with my answer; a sense of duty to the public, and of propriety as it relates to yourselves; requires the transmission of both, to you; for the purpose which is expressed in the latter.

After the severe weather we have had, I think it probable there will be an early Spring: In which event, I persuade myself that great exertions will be used to forward the Capitol in preference to any other object. All others indeed depend, in a high degree, thereon, and are, or ought to be, subordinate thereto. As well therefore with a view to remove those unhappy jealousies

(which have had a baneful influence on the affairs of that City) as to invigorate the operations on that building, I cannot too often, nor too strongly enjoin it upon those who have not already taken their stands in the City, to do it without delay; and as convenient to the important theatre, as they can be accommodated.

It may be relied on, that even among the best disposed friends to the Act for establishing the seat of government, on the Potomac, there are many who intermix doubts with anxiety, lest the principal building should not be in a situation to accommodate Congress by the epoch of their removal; and it is not less certain, that private buildings (which are essential for the accommodation of their members) will progress no faster than the other: nay less, as buildings around the Capitol will be erected principally by the wealthy, by those who would take in boarders, and by Shop-keepers; the whole of these, more than probable, will wait until the accomplishment of the first (the prospect of it I mean) is reduced to a moral certainty.

It is not only of infinite importance therefore to make all other measures yield, in *reality* to this, but in *appearance* also; especially, under the present difficulty of obtaining loans, and the uncertainty of your funds; which *must* depend upon public opinion, and the confidence which is placed in the administration of them. To what I have here said, I shall only add the esteem and regard of

Gentlemen Your etc. ¹¹

11. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioner of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

***To WILLIAM BLOUNT AND WILLIAM COCKE**

February 1, 1797.

Gentlemen: Some days ago I recd a letter from you with enclosures, recommending John Rhea Esqr. for District Judge, of the District of Tennessee. The Act for establishing that Office, having now obtained all the requisite forms, the nomination of a character to fill it has become necessary: but before I proceed to it, I wish to know what specific objections, if any, there are to Mr. Dd. Campbell,¹² who has been one of the Judges under the authority of the United States for that District since the establishment of the Government therein; who came very highly recommended to me for his *integrity* and *fit* abilities for that office, and against whom, no impeachment of his conduct has come to my knowledge. With respect I am etc.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, February 15, 1797.

Gentlemen: Several of your letters have been received within these few days; and notwithstanding the accumulation of business, consequent of the near epoch for my quitting the chair of government, the receipt of them should not have remained so long unacknowledged had I not placed such as related to the Power of Attorney, and to some disputed points, into the hands of the Law Officer of the United States for his official opinion; without having received his report; owing, I believe,

12. David Campbell.

to his having been hurried, almost, as much as myself.

Thus circumstanced, I shall confine the subject of this letter wholly to the expression of my sentiments relatively to the public buildings; conceiving it necessary that you should be informed of them without delay.

When in the course of the Autumn you suggested the propriety of designating the sites for the Executive Offices, and for providing materials for their erection, I yielded a ready assent; and still think that if we had the means at command, and no doubt was entertained of the adequacy of them, that these buildings ought to commence.

But, when the difficulty in obtaining loans; and the disadvantageous terms on which the money is borrowed, has since become so apparent; when I see those whose interest it is to appreciate the credit of the City, and to aid the Commissioners in all their laudable exertions brooding over their jealousies, and spreading the Seeds of distrust; and when I perceive (as I clearly do) that the public mind is in a state of doubt, if not in despair of having the principal building in readiness for Congress, by the time contemplated; for these reasons I say, and for others which might be enumerated, I am now decidedly of opinion that the edifices for the Executive Offices ought to be suspended; that the work on the house for the President should advance no faster (at the expence or retardment of the Capitol) that is necessary to keep pace therewith; and to preserve it from injury; and that all the means (not essential for other purposes) and all the force, ought to be employed on the Capitol.

It may be relied on, that it is the progress of that building, that is to inspire, or depress public confidence. Under any circumstances this, more or less would be the case; but when it is reported by many, and believed by some

(without foundation I am persuaded) that there is a bias elsewhere; it is essential on the score of policy, and for the gratification of the public wishes, that this work should be vigorously prosecuted in the manner I have suggested. And I require it accordingly. Consider'd in a simple point of view, the matter stands thus. Are the funds sufficient to accomplish *all* the objects which are contemplated? If doubts arise, then, which of those objects are to be preferred? on this ground there would be but one opinion; every body would cry out, the Capitol. Again, admit that the resources will ultimately be adequate, but cannot be drawn forth in the ratio of your general wants, will not the same answer, as it respects time, apply with equal force to the building just mentioned? This then, seems to be safe ground to proceed on. It would gratify the public wishes and expectation; might, possibly, appease clamour; and, if all the buildings cannot be completed in time, no material evil would result from the postponement of the subordinate Offices, until the Capitol is in such a state of forwardness as to remove all doubts of its being ready for the reception of Congress by the time appointed. Another good (mentioned in a former letter) would flow therefrom; which is, that in proportion as that building advanced, and doubts subsided, private buildings would be erected where they would be most wanted for the accommodation of the members. The public offices might shift (as they have done) a while longer. I write in much haste (for this morning's Post) that the letter may get to you in

the course of the week. If I have expressed myself in such a manner as to be clearly understood it is enough you must excuse the scrawl, and believe me to be, with esteem, &c.¹⁶

16. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, February 17, 1797.

Gentlemen: In looking over the press copy of the letter I wrote you by the Post of Wednesday last, which was penned in great haste, to be in time for the Mail; I perceive some ambiguity in the expression of my sentiment respecting the building designated for the President of the U. States; and therefore these lines are given in explanation.

It was not, nor is it my intention, that the work on that house should cease; for that might prove injurious to the parts that are already executed, and to the materials which are prepared for the completion of the Walls and covering the same. The idea I meant to convey was, that these should go on, but with as moderate means as would accomplish the object, and guard the edifice from damage by weather; employing the *remaining* force on the Capitol; resting the matter upon a little time, and the prospect of your funds, to determine, unequivocally, whether *both* buildings can be completed by the year 1800: and until this is ascertained, to proceed on the Capitol in the manner, and for the purposes I have mentioned to you before.

It has been advised, that an Act of Congress should be obtained for incorporating the Commissioners of the City of Washington, and their successors, for the particular purpose of enabling them to take and hold in fee simple for the use of the United States, the lands within the City, set apart and appropriated by the President to their use.

It is supposed possible that some inconvenience may arise at a future day if the conveyance be made to any persons and their heirs in their individual capacity,

by reason of their absence, infancy, or other unforeseen causes which will not occur in case the Commissioners are incorporated and the conveyance is made to them. A bill for this purpose is now before Congress and expected to pass. So soon as a decision is had upon it a direction will be sent

for a conveyance of those appropriated lands to be made to the Commissioners if incorporated; if not then to the same persons in their individual capacity.

At the sametime, perhaps sooner, I will give you my sentimts. on the Memorial of Mr. Davidson,¹⁷ and other matters. In the meantime, with esteem etc.¹⁸

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, February 20, 1797.

Gentlemen: Reasons which I have frequently assigned, have prevented me from acknowledging sooner, the receipt of your letter of the 3d. instant; relatively to the Memorial of Mr. Davidson. Indeed I have so often expressed my unwillingness to depart from the engraved plan in any instance where it could be avoided, that I had hoped no repetition of this sort would have been made to you, by any of the Proprietors.

Whether the area in front of the building intended for the President of the United States be circular, according to Majr. L'Enfants plan, or square as the engraved one represents, is immaterial in the abstract, or as it concerns the Public and Mr. Davidson *only*; but if

17. Samuel Davidson.

18. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

the gratification of that gentleman sets a principle afloat, and thereby opens a door to similar applications, it attaches an importance which may involve inextricable difficulties.

To what Mr. Davidson alludes in the scored part of the following sentence, "I can venture to assert that numberless deviations were made by Majr. Ellicott from the original plan, and *I have reason to believe that many have been made since*" you, much better than I, can explain. That many alterations have been made from Majr. L'Enfants plan by Majr. Ellicott, (with the approbation of the Executive) is not denied; that some were deemed essential is avowed; and had it not been for the materials which he happened to possess, 'tis probable no engraving from Majr. L'Enfants draught would ever have been exhibited to the public; for after the disagreement which took place between him and the late Commissioners, his obstinacy threw every difficulty it could, in the way of its accomplishment.

To this summary may be added, that Mr. Davidson is mistaken if he supposes, that the transmission of Majr. L'Enfants Plan of the City to Congress, was the completion thereof. So far from it, it will appear by the Message which accompanied the same that it was given as matter of information, to show in what state the business was in, and the return of it requested. That neither house of Congress passed any act consequent thereupon. That it remained as before, under the controul of the Executive. That afterwards, several errors were discovered and corrected, many alterations made, and the appropriations (except as to the Capitol and Presidents house) struck out under that authority, before it was sent to the Engraver; intending *that*

his work, and the promulgation thereof, were to give it the final, and regulating stamp.

I have been thus particular to show that Mr. Davidson is not treading on solid ground, or in other words, that he is claiming as a matter of right what can only be yielded on the principle of harmony, or for mutual benefit; and therefore, it only remains to be repeated, that if the proposed alteration would have a tendency towards inviting applications of a similar nature I shall be decidedly against the measure. If on the other hand, the case is singular, and no consequences would be involved in the acquiescence; as it is immaterial whether the area is semicircular or square; as contention may be avoided, and both parties, in a pecuniary point of view benefited, I leave the question, under the provisos before mentioned, to your own decision; as you must have a more comprehensive view of circumstances than I can acquire.

The other part of Mr. Davidson's memorial is yet more extraordinary; for if the Proprietors, in consideration of having the permanent Seat of the Government established among them, yielded a portion of their property for public uses, shall, afterwards, take upon themselves to decide what shall not be done with it, they may, by the same parity of reason, direct the uses to which the squares shall be applied. This is too absurd. With esteem and regard, I am etc.

P.S. I am informed that Mr. Had field is enquiring, in this City, for Carvers. I earnestly recommend, that

all carving not *absolutely necessary* to preserve consistency, may be avoided; as well to save time and expence, as because I believe it is not so much the taste now as formerly.²¹

***To THE VICE PRESIDENT**

Monday, February 20, 1797.

Dear Sir: I thank you for giving me the perusal of the enclosed, The sentiments do honor to the head and heart of the writer, and if my wishes would be of any avail they should go to you in a *strong hope* that you will not withhold merited promotion for Mr. John Adams²⁰ because he is your Son. For without intending to compliment the father or the mother, or to censure any others, I give it as my decided opinion that Mr. Adams is the most valuable public character we have abroad, and that he will prove himself to be the ablest of all our Diplomatic Corps.

If he was now to be brought into *that* line, or into any other public walk, I could not, upon the principle which has regulated my own conduct, disapprove the caution which is hinted at in the letter. But he is already entered; the public more and more, as he is known, are appreciating his talents and worth; and his country would sustain a loss if these are checked by over delicacy on your part. With sincere esteem and affectionate regard I am etc.

21. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

20. John Quincy Adams.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, February 27, 1797.

Gentlemen: As the curtain is about to close on the political scenes of my life; and consequently to terminate the agency I have had in the affairs of the Federal City; I will, as far as a very hurried situation will permit, take notice of such parts of your several letters as remain undecided on.

Having already informed you, that a Bill is pending in Congress for Incorporating the Commissioners of the City of Washington, I shall say, or rather do nothing, relative to the Power you sent me, until the fate of that Bill is known.

I am obliged also to be silent respecting the reference of the dispute with Mr. Law; as the Attorney General, into whose hands the Papers were placed for an official opinion, has not yet made his *final* Report. So soon as it is received, it shall be transmitted, and my sentiments therewith.

With regard to the open areas in the City, occasioned by the intersection of the Streets and avenues, explained more minutely by one of the Commissioners (Doctr. Thornton) in a letter to me, dated the 12th. instant, my opinion is, if I understand the matter rightly, that the Proprietors are entitled to no

allowance for the spaces which are occasioned, simply, by the width of those Streets and avenues: but, where the areas have been enlarged by taking off the angles, in order to encrease the size of the squares, or to throw them into a circular form, it appears reasonable and just, that they should receive payment for the proportion secured to them by contract, for all

such additions; but without any encroachment thereon, or change in the plan.

The Plans of the buildings for the Executive departments are in the hands of the Officers who are at the head of them. If possible, I will give some direction concerning them before I resign the Chair of Government; in order that every thing which has been referred to me, may have met with a decision.

I come now, Gentlemen, to the consideration of your sevl. letters relative to the representation made to me by Mr. Geo: Walker. It is not to be supposed that, my communication to you proceeded from any alteration in the good opinion wch. I have always had reason to entertain of you; but from other motives which were on a former occasion expressed: and it affords me pleasure to declare to you, before I go out of Office, my real satisfaction with your conduct as Commissioners of the City. I think the United States are interested in the continuance of you in their Service, and therefore I should regret, if either of you by resignation, should deprive them of the assistance which I believe you are able to give in the business committed to your care.

As those representations were more particularly pointed against Mr. Scott, a sense of justice seems to require me to express, that according to the best of my information the charges are unfounded; and that nothing in him is wanting, except residence in the City, to render him a useful and valuable member of the board of Commissioners. the necessity of which I am persuaded he must see and will yield accordingly. With very great etc.²⁵

25. From the *House of Representatives Collection* in the Library of Congress.

On February 27 Washington replied to addresses from the common council of Philadelphia; and to the select committee of Philadelphia. The drafts of these brief replies are in the *Washington Papers*.

***To HENRY KNOX**

Philadelphia, March 2, 1797.

My dear Sir: Amongst the last Acts of my political life, and before I go hence into retirement, *profound* , will be the acknowledgment of your kind and affectionate letter from Boston, dated the 15th. of January.³⁷

From the friendship I have always borne you, and from the interest I have ever taken in whatever relates to your prosperity and happiness, I participated in the sorrows which I know you must have felt for your late heavy losses.³⁸ But is not for man to scan the wisdom of Providence. The best he can do, is to submit to its decrees. Reason, religion and Philosophy, teaches us to do this, but 'tis time alone that can ameliorate the pangs of humanity, and soften its woes.

To the wearied traveller who sees a resting place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself; but to be suffered to do *this* in peace, is I perceive too much, to be endured by *some* . To misrepresent my motives; to reprobate my politics; and to weaken the confidence which has been reposed in my administration, are objects which cannot be relinquished by those who, will be satisfied with nothing short of a change in our political System. The consolation however, which results from conscious rectitude, and the approving voice of my Country, unequivocally expressed by its Representatives, deprives their sting of its poison, and places in the same point of view both the weakness, and malignity of their efforts.

Although the prospect of retirement

37. In the *Washington Papers*.

38. The death of three children.

is most grateful to my soul, and I have not a wish to mix again in the great world, or to partake in its politics, yet, I am not without my regrets at parting with (perhaps never more to meet) the few intimates whom I love, among these, be assured you are one.

The account given by Mr. Bingham and others, of your agreeable Situation and prospects at St. George's, gave me infinite pleasure; and no one wishes more sincerely than I do, that they may increase with your years. The remainder of my life (which in the course of nature cannot be long) will be occupied in rural amusements, and though I shall seclude myself as much as possible from the noisy and bustling crowd, none more than myself, would be regaled by the company of those I esteem, at Mount Vernon: more than 20 Miles from which, after I arrive there, it is not likely I ever shall be.

As early in next week as I can make arrangements for it, I shall commence my journey for Mount Vernon. To morrow, at dinner, I shall, as a servant of the public, take my leave of the President Elect,³⁹ of the foreign characters, heads of Departments, &ca. And the day following, with pleasure, I shall witness the inauguration of my Successor to the Chair of government.

On the subject of Politics I shall say nothing; you will have an opportunity of seeing and conversing with many of the Legislators; from whom, so far as it relates to the proceedings of their own body, they can give you the details. The Gazettes will furnish the rest.

Mrs. Washington unites with me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Knox and family, and with unfeigned truth, I am yours always, and affectionately.

[MS.H.S]

39. John Adams.

***To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Philadelphia, March 3, 1797.

Gentlemen: Three things relative to the City of Washington call for my decision, and this is the last day I have Powers to give any.

The first respects the dispute with Mr. Law, touching the conveyances of Lotts; the second, to my approbation of the Plans for the Executive Offices; and the third, to the Instrument you transmitted to me in your letter of the 31st. of January.

With regard to the first, however hard and unexpected the case may be as it affects the public interest, and whatever my private opinion on some points may be; I think it safest, and all things considered perhaps the best, to let the opinion of the Law Officer of the government, herewith enclosed, prevail; and I advise it accordingly. The second, not only meets my approbation, but is much approved also by the heads of Departments; and may, when the funds and other circumstances wall permit be carried into effect; for which purpose the Plans are returned with my approving signature. On the other, or third point, the Bill for incorporating the Commissioners of the City of Washington, has not been passed into a Law, in consequence of the superior claim of more important matters upon the attention of Congress in the close of the present Session. The

instrument you transmitted to me, as mentioned before, having been altered according to the advice of the Attorney General you will herewith receive, formally executed.⁴⁴

Another matter occurs which

44. A copy of this power of conveyance, dated Mar. 2, 1797, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

is necessary to apprise you of. In your letter of the 31st. of Jany. it is said

We have forwarded to the Secretary of State, a plan of the City undercover to Messrs. Willinck, with all the public property particularly designated on the face of it; and have written to those Gentlemen, pressing them to forward the loan by all the means in their power.

Inquiring the other day of the Secretary if it was dispatched, he answered that no such packet had been recd. by him.

Your letter of the 27th. Ult. is received and I am sorry your prospt. of a loan in Holld. is so bad. With esteem etc.⁴⁵

***To JONATHAN TRUMBULL**

Philadelphia, March 3, 1797.

My dear Sir: Before the curtain drops on my political life, which it will do this evening, I expect for ever; I shall acknowledge, although it be in a few hasty lines only, the receipt of your kind and affectionate letter of the 23d. of January last.

When I add, that according to custom, all the Acts of the Session; except two or three very unimportant Bills, have been presented to me within the last four days, *you* will not be surprised at the pressure under which I write at present; but it must astonish *others* who know that the Constitution allows the President ten days to deliberate on *each Bill* that is brought before him that he should be allowed by the Legislature less than half that time to consider *all* the business of the Session; and in some instances, scarcely an hour to revolve the most impor

45. From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

tant. But as the scene is closing, with me, it is of little avail *now* to let it be with murmers.

I should be very unhappy if I thought my relinquishing the Reins of government wd. produce any of the consequences which your fears forebode. In all free governments, contention in elections will take place; and, whilst it is confined to our own citizens it is not to be regretted; but severely indeed ought it to be reprobated when occasioned by foreign machinations. I trust however, that the good sense of our Countrymen will guard the public weal against this, and every other innovation; and that, altho we may be a little wrong, now and then, we shall return to the right path, with more avidity. I can never believe that Providence, which has guided us so long, and through such a labyrinth, will withdraw its protection at this Crisis.

Although I shall resign the chair of government without a single regret, or any desire to intermeddle in politics again, yet there are many of my compatriots (among whom be assured I place you) from whom I shall part sorrowing; because, unless I meet with them at Mount Vernon it is not likely that I shall ever see them more, as I do not expect that I shall ever be twenty miles from it after I am tranquilly settled there. To tell you how glad I should be to see you at that place is unnecessary; but this I will add, that it would not only give me pleasure, but pleasure also to Mrs. Washington, and others of the family with whom you are acquainted; and who all unite in every good wish for you, and yours, with Dear Sir, Your sincere friend and Affectionate Servant.

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

[Philadelphia, March 3, 1797.]

[Dr] Sir: At the conclusion of my public employments, I have thought it expedient to notice the publication of certain forged letters which first appeared in the year 1777, and were obtruded upon the public as mine. They are said by the editor to have been found in a small portmanteau, that I had left in the care of my Mulatto servant named Billy,⁴⁶ who, it is pretended, was taken prisoner at Fort Lee, in 1776. The period when these letters were first printed will be recollected, and what were the impressions they were intended to produce on the public mind. It was then supposed to be of some consequence to strike at the integrity of the motives of the American Commander in Chief, and to paint his inclinations as at variance with his professions and his duty. Another crisis in the affairs of America having occurred, the same weapon has been resorted to, to wound my character and deceive the people.

The letters in question have the dates, addresses, and signatures here following.

New-York, June 12, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, at Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia. G.W.

To John Parke Custis, Esqr. at the Hon. Benedict Calvert's Esqr. Mount Airy, Maryland, June 18, 1776.
Geo. Washington.

New-York, July 8, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, at Mount-Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia. G.W.

New-York, July 16, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, &c. G.W.

46. William Lee.

New-York, July 15, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, &c. G.W.

New-York, July 22, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, &c. G.W.

June 24, 1776. To Mrs. Washington. G.W.

At the time, when these letters first appeared, it was notorious to the army immediately under my command, and particularly to the gentlemen attached to my person, that my Mulatto Man Billy had never been one moment in the power of the enemy. It is also a fact, that no part of my baggage, or any of my attendants, were captured during the whole course of the war. These well-known facts made it unnecessary, during the war, to call the public attention to the forgery, by any express declaration of mine: and a firm reliance on my fellow-citizens, and the abundant proofs they gave of their confidence in me, rendered it alike unnecessary to take any formal notice of the revival of the imposition, during my civil administration. But as I cannot know how soon a more serious event may succeed to that which will this day take place, I have thought it a duty that I owed to Myself, to my Country and to Truth, now to detail the circumstances above recited; and to add my solemn declaration, that the letters herein described are a base forgery, and that I never saw or heard of them until they appeared in print.

The present letter I commit to your care, and desire that it may be deposited in the office of the department of state, as a testimony of the truth

to the present generation and to posterity. [Accept, I pray you, the sincere esteem and affectionate regard of, dear Sir, &c.]⁴⁷

47. The draft is in the writing of Timothy Pickering. The words in brackets are in the writing of Washington.